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THE CITY OF GOD

(*DE CIVITATE DEI*)



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THE CITY OF GOD

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BY

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BY JOHN HEALEY

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JOHN GRANT

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THE CITY OF GOD

FOR THE CITY OF GOD

BY JOHN C. GARDNER

A TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH
OF THE CITY OF GOD

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JOHN C. GARDNER

1900



INTRODUCTION.

THE book before us was written by the greatest father of the Western Church, under circumstances which must be rapidly told here.

The Getes or Goths, the greatest of the Teutonic races, appear to have moved in the second century into Central Europe. Theories and opinions as to their origin would be out of place here. There were three principal tribes of them—the Visigoths, touching the Upper, and the Ostrogoths, the Lower Danube, and the Gepids or “Loiterers,” north of both. In the third century, when the mighty Roman Empire had begun to decay, when its rulers were nearly all military adventurers, putting down each man his predecessor, and perishing violently in his turn; when the finances were in confusion, and civil war, famine, and pestilence, combined to lay the lands desolate, the Goths saw their opportunity. They began to harry the border lands of the Empire, crossed the Danube, and met the Emperor Decius himself at Philippopolis (in the valley of the Maritza), where he perished. Though they were not organised sufficiently to enable them to wage more than this border warfare, they were plainly a terrible danger to the Empire, and one of the wisest of the emperors, Aurelian, gave them a land to dwell in—that which is now called Roumania. This was in 270 A.D., and for nearly a hundred years they dwelt there in peace. Retaining their warlike character, they put off their nomadism, hewed down the forests, and sowed corn. They learned the Latin tongue, and may be henceforth reckoned as partaking of Roman civilization. During those years great religious events were taking place in the Roman Empire, which profoundly affected its destinies. The Arian heresy arose, and was condemned at the Council of Nicæa in 325, but vast numbers of people still followed it, and the family of the Emperor Constantine made it for a while the national religion. A good monk, the greatest man of the fourth century after Constantine and Athanasius, named Ulfilas, went away from the Arian Court of Constantinople, himself an Arian, as he had been brought up, and became the first missionary and Christian apostle of the Goths. He carried on the work of civilization among them, not only by teaching them to relinquish the worship of Odin for that of Christ, but also by translating the Holy Scriptures into their tongue. And thus he became the founder of our own literature. His translation may be bought in printed form, with the Anglo-Saxon and the modern English versions in parallel columns, and the reader may thus see the first shape which his mother-tongue took in writing, and how it passed on from stage to stage, until it is now the most widely spoken tongue in the world. The Arianism however was simply disastrous. The heresy was not only deadly as regards the Christian faith, but it brought a cruel schism in its

wake. Gothic civilization never passed beyond an imperfect stage, and the perfect union of the races which might have healed the evils of the time was hindered by this root of bitterness.

In the year 365 a fierce and savage tribe of barbarians appeared from the East, the Huns or Tartars, and fiercely attacked the Goths in their Roumanian home, who appealed to the Emperor Valens at Constantinople, and he, under hard conditions, gave them leave to cross the Danube and settle on its southern bank. It is said that more than a million of them crossed in a day. No such movement is recorded since the Exodus of Israel. Here they might have made a new home and all might yet have been well. But the officers of the Empire took advantage of their terror to rob and ill-use them. They took their money from them and fed them with such refuse as the flesh of dogs. Yet for a long time they endured patiently. At length they broke out and ravaged Thrace. The Emperor Valens went against them and perished, as Decius had done, August 9, 378. From this time the Goths settled in Thrace, and established a permanent footing in the Eastern Empire. The West was still free from them, though that too was in heavy trouble from the mismanagement of the sons of the Emperor Valentinian, which had encouraged the Franks on the banks of the Lower Rhine to harass the imperial territory there. The Emperor had almost deserted Rome for Milan. The Romans were sullen, and no longer revered or cared for the Cæsars.

It was this, and the incompetence of the Roman Emperor Honorius, a slothful, cowardly creature, who cared for nothing but sporting and poultry breeding, which moved Alaric, the king of the Visigoths, from his home in Thrace to cast hungry eyes over the riches of the Western Empire. He was a "barbarian" in the estimation of the proud Romans, but he was not an illiterate man. An Arian, like his people, but no savage like Attila or Jenghis Khan. He has been compared to our own Black Prince, as having in him something of the spirit of a knight-errant. He now declared boldly that he had been a subject of the Roman Empire long enough, that he and his people would have a policy of their own. And so he moved about for a while restlessly on the banks of the Danube, between the Drave and Saor, as if uncertain on what part to swoop down. He had a skilful antagonist in the Western general, Stilicho, and those interested in the history of warfare will be fascinated with the story of the long duel between these two commanders. It was in the year 400 that Alaric invaded Italy, "not with an army but with a nation," writes Gibbon, for the warriors were accompanied by their wives and children, as being determined to make a home in the rich valleys of Italy. On Good Friday 402, Stilicho defeated Alaric at the battle of Pollentia, and the rejoicings which followed in Rome are memorable because of the heroism of the monk Telemachus. The horrible fights of the gladiators were beginning in the Coliseum; he rushed into the midst to stop them. The infuriated people called on the combatants to kill him, and it was done. But cool reflection brought bitter remorse and shame, and from that time this hideous pastime ceased in Rome for ever.

The battle of Pollentia was followed by Stilicho, not by pressing his opponent with fresh warfare, but by negotiation. The details are unknown. Probably he contemplated coalition with the fair-haired "barbarian" and sending him to Constantinople as the minister of the Western Empire, and

so uniting the Empire again. For Arcadius had just died, leaving a son of seven years old. But whatever was the character of the proposals, they were brought to naught by the murder of Stilicho, by order of the foolish Honorius, who had been persuaded by his evil advisers. Stilicho might have saved the Empire; his removal gave Alaric his opportunity. He marched across Northern Italy, besieged Rome in 408, and without a sword crossed, was bought off by a heavy payment of gold, silver, silken robes, and pepper. Again he came and, after some strange hesitation which cannot be now satisfactorily accounted for, drew off his forces, the servile Senate having consented to make him "Prefect of the City," and set up a puppet emperor, Attalus, who would be his slave. In 410 came his third siege, the Senate having deposed his creature Attalus. This time there was no mistake. On the 24th of August he broke into the hitherto uncaptured city and it was given up to violence, savage cruelty, and rapine. This was the real end of old Rome. When the noise of the conflict had died away Rome was a great city indeed but under new conditions. Two great writers poured forth their sorrow over its fall—Jerome, from his monk's cell at Bethlehem, and Augustine at Hippo. Fugitives poured forth from Italy, some to the Mediterranean Islands, some to Africa, some to Palestine; and every one had fresh horrors to tell of misery and wrong. The aged Marcella, whose adviser Jerome had been, the first of the noble and rich ladies of Rome to adopt the ascetic life, had been racked and scourged and trampled to death. Jerome wrote a touching letter about her; and about the hapless city he wrote thus (Pref: to his Commentary on Ezekiel): "No doubt all things born are doomed to die, and that which hath grown to maturity must grow old. Every work of man is attacked by decay, and destroyed by age. But who would have believed that Rome, victorious so oft over the universe, would at length crumble in pieces, the mother at once and the grave of her children? She who made slaves of the East has herself become a slave, and nobles once laden with riches come to little Bethlehem to beg. In vain I try to draw myself away from the sight by turning to my books. I am unable to heed them."

Augustine's work on this subject was of a very different character. He was eight years younger than Jerome, a stronger man, and in more immediate contact with the world. The Fall of Rome drew forth from him the very greatest of his works, "*De Civitate Dei*," the translation of which is now before us. He began it in 412 and finished it in 427.

It must be remembered that though Paganism had for a century been abolished as the State religion, it lingered on throughout the country, and some of its traditions remained like a false conscience in the minds of those who had in good faith accepted Christianity. In the first glow of zeal, indeed, the people declared that their happiness in the days of Constantine was an evidence of the superiority of the new Faith to the old. But when the disasters of the Gothic invasion fell on them, there were not wanting those who declared that the anger of the gods was breaking forth against the desecration of their temples. Paganism, with its rites, was revived as soon as the troubles began;¹ and when the city was besieged so fiercely, the fugitives by sea and land cried out that the gods had forsaken the city which for a thousand years they had protected and made mistress of the world. The

¹ See a very striking account in Mr Hodgkin's "*Italy and her Rulers*," vol. ii.

faith of the Church was sorely tried. It had been hoped that the golden age would return with the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ, that the glorious visions of Isaiah would now be fulfilled. What were they to reply to the taunts which were now hurled at them? Augustine's great treatise was the answer to this question.

The first ten books are entirely occupied with it. He enumerates with thrilling eloquence the misfortunes of Rome while she worshipped the gods, and the misfortunes, too, of other nations which had bowed down to them. When Regulus was tortured to death at Carthage; when Hannibal slaughtered the Romans by thousands and marched up to the very gates of the city; when Mithridates massacred their army; and Sulla and Marius deluged the streets with the blood of the citizens; and Pompey fought against Cæsar, and the young Octavius against Brutus and Cassius, where were the gods then?

In the last twelve chapters he takes up a new subject, the contrast between the human and the Divine City. The city of men is built upon self-aggrandisement, while the basis of this heavenly City is the Love of God. He traces the contrast from the very beginning. Ever since men "began to call on the Name of the Lord" (Gen. iv. 26) God was calling out His Church to bear witness against the world and its selfishness. Cain and Seth were the two fathers of the city of men and the City of God. He summarises the teaching of the Old Testament, and sees in it the continued witness of the Sovereign Righteousness of God; and with the unity of the Hebrew Prophets in always putting this as the centre of their teaching he contrasts the contradictory theories of the heathen philosophers. Much of this part of his work is confessedly taken from Varro's Book of Antiquities, and, though this work of that learned writer is now lost, we are thus familiar with it at second-hand through Augustine. It was a complete mythology of Italy minutely describing everything relating to religious ceremonial. In spite of its polytheism, Augustine sees in the whole history of the great city a Providential hand, a hand which united the nations together, organised them into a wonderful unity, taught them the sacredness of family life, and in each and every way sowed the ground for the Christian missionaries to reap. The great philosopher—and he was the acutest and most fearless thinker of all the Christian fathers—discusses boldly the condition of the work in his time, and shows how Christianity has already wrought marvels of beneficence. And he augurs from what has been done, greater triumphs in the generations to come, and ends with a glorious prognostication of the perfect beauty to be revealed, when the heavenly City shall shine forth in all its magnificence, and sorrow, pain, death, shall have passed away for ever.

The translation now presented to the reader is reprinted from a copy published in 1610, "printed by George Eld," without any mention of place, and said to be "Englised by J. H." It is dedicated, in the fulsome language which seems to have been looked upon in those days as not lacking in good taste—witness Bacon's dedication of the "Advancement of Learning," and that prefixed to an authorised version of the Bible:—"To the honorablest patron of Muses and Good Mindes, Lord William, Earl of Pembroke." This dedication states that the translator has departed to a better world, but "bequeathed at henceparting this his translation at the imprinting," to the protection of this Earl. It is signed "Th: Th:."

W. B



St Augustine.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

—:O:—

CHAPTER I.

*Of the adversaries of the name of Christ, spared by the barbarians
in the sacking of Rome, only for Christ's sake.*

THAT most glorious society and celestial city of God's faithful, which is partly seated in the course of these declining times, wherein "he that liveth by faith,"¹ is a pilgrim amongst the wicked; and partly in that solid estate of eternity, which as yet the other part doth patiently expect, until "righteousness be turned into judgment,"² being then by the proper excellence to obtain the last victory, and be crowned in perfection of peace; have I undertaken to defend in this work: which I intend unto you (my dearest Marcellinus) as being your due by my promise, and exhibit it against all those that prefer their false gods before this city's founder: the work is great and difficult, but God the Master of all difficulties is our helper.³ For I know well what strong arguments are required to make the proud know the virtue of humility, by which (not being enhanced by human glory, but endowed with divine grace) it surmounts all earthly loftiness, which totters through the one transitory instability. For the King, the builder of this city, whereof we are now to discourse, hath opened His mind to His people, in the divine law, thus: "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."⁴ Now this which is indeed only God's, the swelling pride of an ambitious mind affecteth also, and loves to hear this as parcel of His praise—

¹ Habac. ii.

² Rom. viii.; Psalm xciii.

³ Psalm lxi.

⁴ James iv.; 1 Pet. v. 5.

"Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos."

'To spare the lowly, and strike down the proud.'

Wherefore touching the temporal city (which longing after domination, though it hold all the other nations under it, yet in itself is overruled by the one lust after sovereignty) we may not omit to speak whatsoever the quality of our proposed subject shall require or permit, for out of this arise the foes against whom God's city is to be guarded. Yet some of these reclaiming their impious errors have become good citizens therein: but others burning with an extreme violence of hate against it, are so thankless to the Redeemer of it for so manifest benefits of His, that at this day they would not speak a word against it, but that in the holy places thereof, flying thither from the sword of the foe, they found that life and safety wherein now they glory. Are not these Romans become persecutors of Christ, whom the very barbarians saved for Christ's sake? Yes, the churches of the Apostles, and the Martyrs can testify this, which in that great sack were free both to their own and strangers. Even thither came the rage of the bloody enemy: even there the murderer's fury stopped: even thither were the distressed led by their pitiful foes (who had spared them, though finding them out of those sanctuaries) lest they should light upon some that should not extend the like pity. And even they that elsewhere raged in slaughters, coming but to those places, that forbade what law of war elsewhere allowed, all their headlong fury curbed itself, and all their desire of conquest was conquered. And so escaped many then, that since have detracted all they can from Christianity: they can impute their city's other calamities, wholly unto Christ, but that good which was bestowed on them only for Christ's honour (namely, the sparing of their lives) that they impute not unto our Christ, but unto their own fate: whereas if they had any judgment, they would rather attribute these calamities and miseries of mortality, all unto the providence of God, which useth to reform the corruptions of men's manners, by war and oppressions, and laudably to exercise the righteous in such afflictions, and having so tried them, either to transport them to a more excellent estate, or to keep them longer in the world for other ends and uses. And whereas the bloody barbarians, against all custom of war, spared them both in other places, for the honour of Christ, and in those large houses that were dedicated unto him (made large, to contain many, for the larger extent of pity); this ought they to ascribe to these Christian times, to give God thanks for it, and to have true recourse by this means unto God's name, thereby to avoid the pains of eternal damnation: which name many of them as then falsely took up, as a sure shelter against the storms of present ruin. For even those that you may now behold most petulantly insulting over Christ's servants, most

of them had never escaped the general massacre, had they not counterfeited themselves to be the servants of Christ. But now, through their ungrateful pride, and ungodly madness, they stand against that name (in perverseness of heart, and to their eternal captivity in darkness) to which they fled with a dissembling tongue, for the obtaining of the enjoying but of this temporal light.

CHAPTER II.

*There never was war wherein the conquerors would spare them
whom they conquered, for the gods they worshipped.*

THERE have been thus many wars chronicled, partly before Rome was built, and partly since her founding: let them read, and find me any one city taken by a stranger foe, that would spare any that they found retired into the temples of their gods, or any barbarian captain, that ever commanded, that in the sack of the town none should be touched that were fled into such or such temples. Did not Æneas see Priamus slain before the altar, and with his blood—

“Sanguine fædantem quos ipse sacraverat ignes”?

‘Sprinkling the flames himself had hallowed’?

Did not Diomede and Ulysses, “having slaughtered all the keepers of the high tower—

“... cæsis summæ custodibus arcis,
Corripuère sacram effigiem manibusque cruentis,
Virgineas ausi divæ contingere vittas.”

‘Snatch up the sacred statue, and with hands
Besmeared in blood, durst touch the Virgin’s veil’?

Yet is not that true which followeth—

“Ex illo fluere ac retrò sublapsa referri
Spes Danaûm”?

‘From thence the Grecian’s hopes decline, and fail’?

For after all this, they conquered: after this they threw down Troy with sword and fire: after this they smote off Priam’s head before the altar that he fled unto. Neither perished Troy because it lost the Palladium: for what had the Palladium lost first, that itself should perish? perhaps the keepers? indeed it is true, they being slain, it was soon taken away: for the image kept not the men, but the men kept the image. But why then was it adored as the preserver of the country and citizens, when it could not preserve its own keepers?

CHAPTER III.

*Of the Romans' fondness in thinking that those Gods could help them
which could not help Troy in her distress.*

BEHOLD unto what patrons the Romans rejoiced to commit the protection of their city! Oh too, too piteous error! Nay, they are angry at us when we speak thus of their gods; but never with their teachers and inventors, but pay them money for learning them such fooleries: yea, and moreover have vouchsafed their authors both stipends from the common treasury and ample honours besides; and namely in Virgil, who was therefore taught unto their children, because that they think this great and most renowned poet, being fastened in their minds whilst they are young, will never easily be forgotten: according to that of Horace—

“Quo semel est imbuta recens seruat odorem—testa diu.”

‘The liquors that new vessels first contains,
Behind them leave a taste that long remains.’

Even in the forenamed poet Virgil is Juno presented as the Trojans’ foe, inciting Æolus, the King of Winds, against them in these words—

“Gens inimica mihi Tyrrhenum navigat æquor
Ilium in Italiam portans, victosque penates.”

‘The nation that I hate in peace sails by,
With Troy and Troy’s fallen gods to Italy.’

Yea, would any wise man have commended the defence of Rome unto gods already proved unable to defend themselves? But suppose Juno spoke this as a woman in anger, not knowing what she said, what says (the so-often surnamed godly) Æneas himself? Does he not say plainly—

“Panthus Otriades, arcis, Phœbique sacerdos,
Sacra manu, Victosque deos parvumque nepotem
Ipse trahit, cursuque, amens ad limina tendit”?

‘Panthus, a priest of Phœbus and the Tower,
Burdened with his fallen gods, and in his hand
His poor young nephew, flies unto the strand’?

Does he not hold these gods (which he dares call fallen) rather commended unto him than he to them; it being said to him—

“Sacra suosque tibi commendat Troia penates”?

‘To thee doth Troy commend her gods, her all’?

If Virgil, then, call them fallen gods, and conquered gods, needing

man's help for their escape after their overthrow and fall, how mad are men to think that there was any wit shown in committing Rome to their keeping, or that it could not be lost, if first it lost not them? To worship conquered and cast gods as guardians and defenders—what is it but to put by good deities, and adore wicked devils? Were there not more wisdom shown in believing) not that Rome had not come to this calamity unless it had first lost them, but) that they had long since come to nothing had not Rome been as the especially careful keeper of them? Who sees not (that will see anything) what an idle presumption it is to build any impossibility of being conquered upon defenders that have been conquered? and to think that Rome therefore perished because it had lost the gods' guardians, when, possibly, the only cause why it perished was because it would set the rest upon such soon perishing guardians? Nor listed the poets to lie when they sung thus of these subverted gods; it was truth that enforced their vigorous spirits to confess it. But of this, more fitly in another place hereafter. At this time (as I resolved at first) I will have a little bout (as well as I can) with those ungrateful persons, whose blasphemous tongues throw those calamities upon Christ, which are only the guerdons of their own perverseness. But whereas Christ's name alone was of power to procure them their undeserved safety, that they do scorn to acknowledge; and being mad with sacrilegious petulancy, they practise their foul terms upon His name, which, like false wretches, they were before glad to take upon them to save their lives by; and those filthy tongues which, when they were in Christ's houses, fear kept silent, to remain there with more safety, where, even for His sake, they found mercy; those selfsame, getting forth again, shoot at His deity with all their envenomed shafts of malice, and curses of hostility.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the sanctuary of Juno in Troy which freed not any (that fled into it) from the Greeks at the city's sack, whereas the Churches of the Apostles saved all comers from the barbarians at the sack of Rome. Cæsar's opinion touching the enemy's custom in the sack of cities.

NOR could Troy itself that was (as I said before) the mother of the Romans' progeny, in all her hallowed temples, save any one from the Grecian force and fury, though they worshipped the same gods: nay did they not in the very sanctuary of Juno,

“ Ipsa Junonis asylo
Custodes lecti Phænix, et dirus Ulysses

Prædam asseruabant. Huc undique Troia gaza
 Incensis erepta adytis, mensæque deorum,
 Cratérésque auro solidi, captivæque vestis
 Congerit " &c ?

‘ To Juno’s sanctuary
 Comes all the prey, and what they thither carry
 Is kept by choice men ; the Phœnician
 And dire Ulysses : thither the whole state
 Of Troy’s wealth swarms, the gods, their temple’s plate,
 There lies the gold in heaps, and robes of worth
 Snatched from the flaming coffers,” &c ?

Behold, the place dedicated unto so great a goddess was chosen out (not to serve for a place whence they might lawfully pull prisoners, but) for a prison wherein to shut up all they took. Now compare this temple, not of any vulgar god, of the common sort, but of Jupiter’s sister, and queen of all the other gods, unto the churches built as memorials of the Apostles. To the first, all the spoils that were plucked from the gods and flaming temples were carried, not to be bestowed back to the vanquished, but to be shared amongst the vanquishers. To the second, both that which was the place’s own and whatever was found also elsewhere to belong to such places, with all religious honour and reverence was restored. There, was freedom lost, here saved : there, was bondage shut in ; here, it was shut out : thither were men brought by their proud foes, for to undergo slavery : hither were men brought by their pitiful foes to be secured from slavery. Lastly the temple of Juno was chosen by the inconstant Greeks to practise their proud covetousness in, whereas the Churches of Christ were by the naturally cruel barbarians chosen to exercise their pious humility in. Perhaps the Greeks in that their victory spared those that fled into the temples of the common gods, and did not dare to hurt or captivate such as escaped thither : but in that, Virgil plays the poet indeed, and feigns it. Indeed there he describes the general custom of most enemies in the sacking of cities, and conquests ; which custom Cæsar himself (as Sallust, that noble, true historian records) forgets not to avouch, in his sentence given upon the conspirators in the Senate house : that (in these spoils) the virgins are ravished, the children torn from their parents’ bosoms, the matrons made the objects of all the victors’ lust, the temples and houses all spoiled, all things turned into burning, and slaughter : and lastly all places stopped full of weapons, carcasses, blood, and lamentation. If Cæsar had not named temples, we might have thought it the custom of a foe to spare such places as are the habitations of their gods : but the senators feared the ruin of their temples, not by an unknown or stranger enemy, but by Catiline, and his followers, who were senators and citizens of Rome themselves. But these were villains though, and their country’s parricides.

CHAPTER V.

That the Romans themselves never spared the temples of those cities which they conquered.

BUT why should we spend time in discoursing of many nations, that have waged wars together, and yet never spared the conquered habitations of one another's gods : let us go to the Romans themselves : yes ; I say, let us observe the Romans themselves, whose chief glory it was—

“ *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.*”

‘ To spare the lowly, and pull down the crowd.’

And being offered injury, rather to pardon than persecute : in all their spacious conquests of towns and cities, in all their progress and augmentation of their domination, show us unto what one temple they granted this privilege, that it should secure him that could fly into it from the enemy's sword ? Did they ever do so, and yet their histories not record it ? Is it like that they that hunted thus for monuments of praise, would endure the suppression of this so goodly a commendation ? Indeed that great Roman, Marcus Marcellus, that took that goodly city of Syracuse, is said to have wept before the ruin, and shed his own tears before he shed their blood : having a care to preserve the chastity even of his foes from violation. For before he gave leave to the invasion, he made an absolute edict, that no violence should be offered unto any free person : yet was the city in hostile manner, subverted utterly, nor find we anywhere recorded, that this so chaste and gentle a general ever commanded to spare such as fled for refuge to this temple or that : which (had it been otherwise) would not have been omitted, since neither his compassion, nor his command for the captives' chastity, is left unrecorded. So is Fabius, the conqueror of Tarentum, commended for abstaining from making booty of their images. For his secretary, asking him what they should do with the images of the gods, whereof they had as then taken a great many : he seasoned his continency with a conceit, for asking what they were, and being answered that there were many of them great ones, and some of them armed : O (said he) let us leave the Tarentines their angry gods. Seeing therefore that the Roman historiographers neither concealed Marcellus his weeping, nor Fabius his jesting, neither the chaste pity of the one, nor the merry obstinence of the other, with what reason should they omit that, if any of them had given such privilege to some men in honour of their gods, that they might save their lives by taking sanctuary in such or such a temple, where neither rape nor slaughter should have any power or place ?

CHAPTER VI.

That the cruel effects following the losses of war, did but follow the custom of war : and wherein they were moderated, it was through the power of the name of Jesus Christ.

THEREFORE all the spoil, murder, burning, violence, and affliction, that in this fresh calamity fell upon Rome, were nothing but the ordinary effects following the custom of war. But that which was so unaccustomed, that the savage nature of the barbarians should put on a new shape and appear so merciful, that it would make choice of great and spacious churches, to fill with such as it meant to show pity on, from which none should be hailed to slaughter or slavery, in which none should be hurt, to which many by their courteous foes should be conducted, and out of which none should be led into bondage ; this is due to the name of Christ, this is due to the Christian profession ; he that seeth not this is blind, he that seeth it and praiseth it not is thankless, he that hinders him that praiseth it, is mad. God forbid that any man of sense should attribute this unto the barbarians' brutishness. It was God that struck a terror into their truculent and bloody spirits, it was He that bridled them, it was He that so wondrously restrained them, that had so long before foretold this by His prophet—"I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges : yet will I not utterly take My mercy from them."¹

CHAPTER VII.

Of the commodities and discommodities commonly communicated both to good and ill.

YEA but (will some say) Why doth God suffer His mercy to be extended unto the graceless and thankless? Oh! why should we judge, but because it is His work "that maketh the sun to shine daily both on good and bad, and the rain to fall both on the just and unjust"?² For what though some by meditating upon this, take occasion to reform their enormities with repentance? and other some (as the apostle saith) despising the richness of God's goodness, and long suffering, in their hardness of heart and impenitency "do lay up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of God's just judgment, who will reward each man according to his works"?³ Nevertheless God's patience still inviteth the wicked unto repentance as this scourge doth instruct the good unto patience. The mercy of God embraceth

¹ Ps. lxxxix. 32, 33.

² Rom. v. 45.

³ Rom. ii. 5.

the good with love, as His severity doth correct the bad with pains. For it seemed good to the almighty Providence to prepare such goods, in the world to come, as the just only should enjoy and not the unjust : and such evils as the wicked only should feel, and not the godly. But as for these temporal goods of this world, He hath left them to the common use both of good and bad : that the goods of this world should not be too much desired, because even the wicked do also partake them : and that the evils of this world should not be too cowardly avoided, wherewith the good are sometimes affected. But there is great difference in the use both of that estate in this world, which is called prosperous, and that which is called adverse. For neither do these temporal goods extol a good man, nor do the evil deject him. But the evil man must needs be subject to the punishment of this earthly unhappiness, because he is first corrupted by this earthly happiness : yet in the distributing of these temporal blessings God showeth His provident operation. For if all sin were presently punished, there should be nothing to do at the last judgment : and again, if no sin were here openly punished, the divine providence would not be believed. And so in prosperity, if God should not give competency of worldly and apparent blessings to some that ask them, we would say He hath nothing to do with them : and should He give them to all that ask them, we should think He were not to be served but for them, and so His service should not make us godly, but rather greedy. This being thus, whatever affliction good men and bad do suffer together in this life, it doth not prove the persons undistinct, because so they both do jointly endure like pains ; for as in one fire, gold shineth and chaff smoketh, and as under one flail the straw is bruised, and the ear cleansed ; nor is the lees and the oil confused because they are both pressed in one press, so likewise one and the same violence of affliction, proveth, purifieth, and melteth the good, and condemneth, wasteth, and casteth out the bad. And thus in one and the same distress do the wicked offend God by detestation and blasphemy, and the good do glorify Him by praise and prayer. So great is the difference wherein we ponder not what, but how a man suffers his affects. For one and the same motion maketh the mud smell filthily, and the unguent smell most fragrantly.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the causes of such corrections as fall both upon the good and bad together.

BUT tell me now in all this desolation what one thing did the Christians endure, which due and faithful consideration, might not turn unto their

edification? For first they might with fear observe to what a mass iniquity was increased, at which the just God being displeased had sent these afflictions upon the world, and that though they themselves were far from the society of the wicked, yet should they not hold themselves so purely separate from all faults, that they should think themselves too good to suffer a temporal correction for diverse faults that might be found in their conversations: for to omit this, that there is no man however laudable in his conversation, that in some things yields not unto the concupiscence of the flesh; and that though he decline not unto the gulf of reprobate offence and habitation of all brutish filthiness, yet slips now and then into some enormities, and those either seldom, or so much more ordinary as than they are less momentary: to omit all this, how hard a thing is it to find one, that makes a true use of their fellowship, for whose horrible pride, luxury, avarice, bestial iniquity and irreligiousness, the Lord (as His prophets have threatened) doth lay His heavy hand upon the whole world? How few do we find that live with them, as good men ought to live with them. For either we keep aloof, and forbear to give them due instructions, admonitions, or reprehensions, or else we hold their reformation too great a labour: either we are afraid to offend them, or else we eschew their hate for our own greater temporal preferment, and fear their opposition either in those things which our greediness longeth to enjoy, or in those which our weakness is afraid to forego: so that though the lives of the wicked be still disliked of the good, and that thereby the one do avoid that damnation which in the world to come is the assured inheritance of the other, yet because they wink at their damnable exorbitances, by reason they fear by them to lose their own vain temporalities, justly do they partake with them in the punishments temporal though they shall not do so in the eternal; justly do they in these divine corrections, taste the bitterness of these transitory afflictions with them, to whom when they deserved those afflictions, they through the love of this life, forbear to show themselves better; indeed he that forbears to reprehend ill courses in some that follow them, because he will take a more fit time, or because he doubts his reprehension may rather tend to their ruin than their reformation, or because he thinks that others that are weak, may by this correction be offended in their godly endeavours or diverted from the true faith: in this case forbearance arises not from occasion of greediness, but from the counsel of charity. But theirs is the fault indeed who live a life quite contrary, wholly abhorring the courses of the wicked, yet will overpass to tax the others' sins whereof they ought to be most severe reprehenders and correctors, because they fear to offend them, and so be hurt in their possession of those things whose use is lawful both unto good and bad, affecting temporalities in this kind far more greedily than is fit for such as are but

pilgrims in this world, and such as expect the hope of a celestial inheritance? for it is not only those of the weaker sort that live in marriage, having (or seeking to have) children, and keeping houses and families: whom the apostle in the Church doth instruct how to live, the wives with their husbands and the husbands with their wives: children with their parents and the parents with their children: the servants with their masters and the masters with their servants: it is not these alone that get together these worldly goods with industry, and lose them with sorrow, and because of which they dare not offend such men as in their filthy and contaminate lives do extremely displease them: but it is also those of the higher sort, such as are no way chained in marriage, such as are content with poor fare and mean attire. Many of these through too much love of their good name and safety, through their fear of the deceits and violence of the wicked; through frailty and weakness, forbear to reprove the wicked when they have offended. And although they do not fear them so far, as to be drawn to actual imitation of these their vicious demeanours; yet this which they will not act with them, they will not reprehend in them (though herein they might reform some of them by this reprehension): by reason that (in case they did not reform them) their own fame and their safety might come in danger of destruction. Now herein they do at no hand consider how they are bound to see that their fame and safety be necessarily employed in the instruction of others, but they do nothing but poise it in their own infirmity, which loves to be stroked with a smooth tongue, and delighteth in the day of man: fearing the censure of the vulgar, and the torture and destruction of body: that is, they forbear this duty, not through any effect of charity, but merely through the power of avarice and greedy affection. Wherefore I hold this a great cause, why the good livers do partake with the bad in their afflictions, when it is God's pleasure to correct the corruption of manners with the punishment of temporal calamities. For they both endure one scourge, not because they are both guilty of one disordered life, but because they both do too much affect this transitory life; not in like measure, but yet both together: which the good man should condemn, that the other by them being corrected and amended, might attain the life eternal: who if they would not join with them in this endeavour of attaining beatitude, they should be borne withal and loved as our enemies are to be loved in Christianity: we being uncertain whilst they live here, whether ever their heart shall be turned unto better or no, which to do, the good men have (not the like, but) far greater reason, because unto them the prophet saith: "He is taken away for his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand," for unto this end were *watchmen*,

¹ Ezek. xxxiii.

that is, rulers over the people, placed in the churches, that they should not spare to reprehend enormities. Nor yet is any other man altogether free from this guilt, whatsoever he be, ruler or not ruler, who in that daily commerce and conversation, wherein human necessity confines him, observeth anything blameworthy, and to reprehend it, seeking to avoid the other's displeasure, being drawn hereunto by these vanities which he does not use as he should, but affecteth much more than he should. Again, there is another reason why the righteous should endure these temporal inflictions, and was cause of holy Job's sufferance, namely that hereby the soul may be proved and fully known whether it hath so much godly virtue as to love God freely, and for Himself alone. These reasons being well considered, tell me whether anything be casual unto the good, that tendeth not to their good: unless we shall hold that the apostle talked idly when he said: "We know all things work together for the best unto them that love God"?

CHAPTER IX.

That the saints in their loss of things temporal lose not anything at all.

THEY lost all that they had: what? their faith? their zeal? goods of the inward man; which enricheth the soul before God? These are a Christian's riches, whereof the apostle being possessed said: "Godliness is a great gain if man be content with what he hath: for we brought nothing into this world, nor can we carry anything out: therefore when we have food and raiment, let us content ourselves therewith, for they that will be rich fall into temptation and snares, and into many foolish and hurtful desires, which drown men in perdition and destruction, for covetousness of money is the root of all evil, which while some lusting after, have erred from the faith, and cast themselves in many sorrows."¹ Such therefore as lost their goods in that destruction, if they held them as the aforesaid apostle (poor without, but rich within) taught them: that is, if they used the world so as if they used it not at all, then might they truly say with him that was so sore assaulted and yet never overthrown: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither again. The Lord hath given it, and the Lord hath taken it away, as it hath pleased the Lord so cometh it to pass: blessed be the name of the Lord."² He held his Lord's will (as a good servant) for great possessions, and by attending that, enriched his spirit: nor grieved he at all at the loss of that in his lifetime, which death perforce

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 6, 7, 8.

² Job i. 21.

would make him leave shortly after. But those far weaker souls, though they prefer not these worldly things before Christ, yet stick unto them with a certain exorbitant affection, they must needs feel such pain in the losing of them, as their offence deserved in loving of them : and endure the sorrows in the same measure that they cast themselves into sorrows : as I said before out of the apostle. For it was meet for them to taste a little of the discipline of experience, seeing they had so long neglected instruction by words : for the apostle having said, " They that will be rich fall into temptations," &c.¹ Herein doth he reprehend the desire after riches only, not the use of them : teaching likewise elsewhere : " Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high minded, and that they trust not in their uncertain wealth, but in the living God, who giveth us plentifully all things to enjoy : that they do good and be rich in good works, ready to distribute and communicate : laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may obtain the true life."² They that did thus with their riches, by easing small burdens, reaped great gains ; taking more joy in that part which by their free distribution unto others they had kept more safely, than they felt sorrow for that which by their care to preserve to themselves they lost so easily. For it was likely that that perish here on earth which they had no mind to remove into a more secure custody. For they that follow their Lord's counsel, when He saith unto them : " Lay not up treasures for yourselves upon the earth where the moth and rust corrupt, or where thieves dig through and steal, but lay up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither rust nor moth corrupt, nor thieves dig through and steal : for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also :"³ these, I say, in the time of tribulation were sure to find how well they were advised in following that Master of all truth, and that diligent and dreadless keeper of all good treasure : for seeing there were many that rejoiced because they had hidden their treasure in a place which the foe by chance overpassed and found not ; how much more certain and secure might their comfort be, that by their God's instruction had retired thither with their substance, whither they were sure the foe could not come ? And therefore one Paulinus, being Bishop of Nola, and having refused infinite riches for voluntary poverty (and yet was he rich in holiness), when the barbarians sacked Nola, and held him prisoner, thus prayed he in his heart (as he told us afterward) : " Lord, let me not be troubled for gold nor silver, for where all my treasures are, thou knowest : " even there had he laid up all his, where He had advised him to lay it who foretold these miseries to fall upon the world. And so others, in that they obeyed God's instructions for the choice and preservation of the true treasure indeed, had even

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 9.² 1 Tim. vi. 17-19.³ Math. vi. 19, 20, 21.

their worldly treasures preserved from the fury of the barbarians : but others paid for their disobedience, and because their precedent wisdom could not do it, their subsequent experience taught them how to dispose of such temporal trash. Some Christians by their enemies were put unto torture, to make them discover where their goods lay : but that good, whereby themselves were good, they could neither lose nor discover. But if they had rather have endured torture than discover their mammon of iniquity, then were they far from good. But those that suffered so much for gold, were to be instructed what should be endured for Christ : that they might rather learn to love Him that enricheth His martyrs with eternal felicity, than gold and silver for which it is miserable to endure any torment, whether it be concealed by lying, or discovered by telling the truth. For no man that ever confessed Christ could lose Him amongst all the torments : whereas no man could ever save his gold but by denying it. Wherefore even those very torments are more profitable, in that they teach a man to love an incorruptible good, than those goods in that they procure their owner's torture through the blind love they bear unto them. But some that had no such goods, and yet were thought to have them, were tortured also. Why? perhaps they had a desire to them though they had them not, and were poor against their wills, not of their own election : and then though their possessions did not justly deserve those afflictions, yet their affections did. But if their minds flew a loftier pitch, beholding both the possession and the affection of riches with an eye of scorn, I make a doubt whether any such were ever tormented in this kind, or being so innocent, incurred any such imputation. But if they did, truly, they in these their tortures, confessing their sanctified poverty, confessed Christ Himself. And therefore though the extorted confession of such holy poverty could not deserve to be believed of the enemy, yet should he not be put to this pain without a heavenly reward for his pains.

CHAPTER X.

Of the end of this transitory life whether it be long or short.

THE extremity of famine they say destroyed many Christians in these invasions. Well, even of this also the faithful, by enduring it patiently, have made good use. For such as the famine made an end of, it delivered from the evils of this life, as well as any other bodily disease could do : such as it ended not, it taught them a sparing diet, and ableness to fast. Yea, but many Christians were destroyed by the foulest variety that might be, falling by so many sorts of death : why this is not to be disliked of, since it is common to all that ever have been born.

This I know, that no man is dead that should not at length have died. For the life's ending, makes the long life and the short all one : neither is there one better and another worse, nor one longer, than another shorter, which is not in this end, made equal. And what skills it what kind of death do despatch our life, when he that dieth cannot be forced to die again? And seeing that every mortal man, in the daily casualties of this life is threatened continually with innumerable sorts of death, as long as he is uncertain which of them he shall taste ; tell me whether it were better to suffer but one in dying once for ever, or still to live in continual fear, than all those extremes of death? I know how unworthy a choice it were to choose rather to live under the awe of so many deaths, than by once dying to be freed from all their fear for ever. But it is one thing when the weak sensitive flesh doth fear it, and another when the purified reason of the soul overcomes it. A bad death never follows a good life : for there is nothing that maketh death bad but that estate which followeth death. Therefore let not their care that needs must die be employed upon the manner of their death, but upon the estate that they are eternally to inherit after death. Wherefore seeing that all Christians know that the death of the religious beggar amongst the dogs licking his sores, was better than the death of the wicked rich man in all his silks and purples, what power hath the horror of any kind of death to affright their souls that have led a virtuous life?

CHAPTER XI.

Of burial of the dead : that it is not prejudicial to the state of a Christian soul to be forbidden it.

OH, but in this great slaughter the dead could not be buried : tush, our holy faith regards not that, holding fast the promise : it is not so frail as to think that the ravenous beasts can deprive the body of any part to be wanting in the resurrection, where not a hair of the head shall be missing. Nor would the scripture have said : " Fear not them that kill the body but are not able to kill the soul : " ¹ if that which the foe could do unto our dead bodies in this world should any way prejudice our perfection in the world to come : unless any man will be so absurd as to contend that they that can kill the body are not to be feared before death lest they should kill it, but after death, lest having killed it they should not permit it burial. Is it false then which Christ saith, " Those that kill the body, after they can do no more," and that they have power to do so much hurt unto the dead carcase? God forbid

¹ Math. x. 28.

that should be false which is spoken by the truth itself: therefore it is said they do something in killing, because then they afflict the bodily sense for a while: but afterwards they can afflict it no more, because there is no sense in a dead body. So then suppose that many of the Christians' bodies never came in the earth: what of that, no man hath taken any of them both from earth and heaven, have they? No: and both these doth His glorious presence replenish that knows how to restore every atom of His work in the created. The Psalmist indeed complaineth thus: "The dead bodies of Thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air: and the flesh of Thy saints unto the beasts of the earth: their blood have they shed like waters round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them."¹ But this is spoken to intimate their villainy that did it, rather than their misery that suffered it. For though that unto the eyes of man these acts seem bloody and tyrannous, yet, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." And therefore all these ceremonies concerning the dead, the care of the burial, the fashions of the sepulchres, and the pomps of the funerals, are rather solaces to the living, than furtherances to the dead. For if a goodly and rich tomb be any help to the wicked man being dead, then is the poor and mean one a hindrance unto the godly man in like case. The family of that rich gorgeous glutton, prepared him a sumptuous funeral unto the eyes of men: but one far more sumptuous did the ministering angels prepare for the poor ulcered beggar, in the sight of God: they bore him not into any sepulchre of marble, but placed him in the bosom of Abraham. This do they scoff at, against whom we are to defend the city of God. And yet even their own philosophers have contemned the respect of burial: and oftentimes whole armies, fighting and falling for their earthly country, went stoutly to these slaughters, without ever taking thought where to be laid, in what marble tomb, or in what beast's belly. And the poets were allowed to speak their pleasures of this theme, with applause of the vulgar, as one doth thus—

'Cælo tegitur qui non habet urnam.'

'Who wants a grave, Heaven serveth for his tomb.'

What little reason then have these miscreants, to insult over the Christians, that lie unburied, unto whom, a new restitution of their whole bodies is promised, to be restored them in a moment,² not only out of the earth alone, but even out of all the most secret angles of all the other elements, wherein any body is or can possibly be included.

¹ Ps. lxxix. 2.

² 1 Cor. xv. 52.

CHAPTER XII.

The reasons why we should bury the bodies of the saints.

NOTWITHSTANDING the bodies of the dead are not to be contemned and cast away, chiefly of the righteous and faithful, which the Holy Ghost used as organs and instruments unto all good works. For if the garment or ring of one's father be so much the more esteemed of his posterity, by how much they held him dearer in their affection, then are not our bodies to be despised, being we wear them more near unto ourselves than any attire whatsoever. For this is no part of external ornament or assistance unto man, but of his express nature. And therefore the funerals of the righteous in the times of old were performed with a zealous care, their burials celebrated, and their monuments provided, and they themselves in their lifetime would lay charges upon their children concerning the burying or translating of their bodies. Tobias¹ in burying of the dead was acceptable unto God, as the angel testifieth. And the Lord Himself being to arise again on the third day, commended the good work of that religious woman,² who poured the precious ointment upon His head and body, and did it to bury Him. And the Gospel hath crowned them with eternal praise that took down His body from the cross, and gave it honest and honourable burial. But yet these authorities prove not any sense to be in the dead carcases themselves, but signify that the providence of God extendeth even unto the very bodies of the dead (for He is pleased with such good deeds) and do build up the belief of the resurrection. Whereby the way we may learn this profitable lesson, how great the reward of alms-deeds done unto the living may be, since this duty and favour shewn but unto the dead is not forgotten of God. There are other prophetic places of the holy Patriarchs³ concerning the entombing or the translation of their own bodies. But this is no place to handle them in, and of this we have already spoken sufficiently: but if the necessities of man's life, as meat and clothing, though they be wanting in great extremity, yet cannot subvert the good man's patience, nor draw him from goodness: how much less power shall those things have which are omitted in the burying of the dead, to afflict the souls that are already at quiet in the secret receptacles of the righteous? And therefore, when as in that great overthrow of Rome, and of other cities, the bodies of the Christians wanted these rights: it was neither fault in the living, that could not perform them, nor hurt to the dead, that could not feel them.

¹ Tobit ii.² Math. xxvi. ; John xix. 42.³ Gen. xlvii., &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the captivity of the saints, and that therein they never wanted spiritual comfort.

AYE, but many Christians (say they) were led into captivity : this indeed had been a lamentable case, if they had been led unto some place where they could not possibly have found their God. But for comforts in captivity, the Scriptures have store : the three children were in bondage : so was Daniel,¹ so were others of the Prophets : but they never wanted God, their comforter. No more did He here abandon His faithful ; being under the command of barbarous men, who forsook not His Prophet being even in the belly of a beast. This now they with whom we are to deal, had rather scorn, than believe, yet of that fable in their own books they are fully persuaded, namely that that same excellent harper Arion of Methymna, being cast overboard, was taken up on a dolphin's back, and so borne safe to land. Is our history of Jonas² more incredible than this ? yes, because it is more admirable ; and it is more admirable, because more powerful.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of Marcus Regulus, who was a famous example to animate all men to the enduring of voluntary captivity for their religion : which notwithstanding, was unprofitable unto him by reason of his Paganism.

YET for all this our enemies have one worthy example proposed by one of their most famous men, for the willing toleration of bondage in the cause of religion : Marcus Attilius Regulus, general of the Roman forces, was prisoner at Carthage : now the Carthaginians being more desirous to exchange their prisoners than to keep them, sent Regulus with their ambassadors to Rome to treat upon this exchange, having first sworn him, that in case he effected not what they desired he should return as captive into Carthage ; so he went unto Rome, and having a day of audience granted him, he persuaded the direct contrary unto his embassy : because he held it was not profitable for the Romans to exchange their prisoners. Not after this persuasive speech did the Romans compel him to return unto his enemies, but willingly did he go back again for saving of his oath. But his cruel foes put him to death with horrible and exquisite torments : for shutting him in a narrow barrel, stuck all full of sharp nails, and so forcing

¹ Dan. i.

² Jonah ii.

him to stand upright, being not able to lean to any side without extreme pains, they killed him even with over-watching him. This virtue in him is worthy of everlasting praise, being made greater by so great infelicity. Now his oath of return, was taken by those gods for the neglect of whose forbidden worship those infidels hold these plagues laid upon mankind. But if these gods (being worshipped only for the attainment of temporal prosperity) either desired, or permitted these pains to be laid upon one that kept his oath so truly, what greater plague could they in their most deserved wrath have inflicted upon a most perjured villain than they laid upon this religious worthy? but why do not I confirm mine argument with a double proof? If he worshipped his gods so sincerely, that for keeping the oath which he had taken by their deities, he would leave his natural country to return not unto what place he liked, but) unto his greatest enemies, if he held that religiousness of his any way beneficial unto his temporal estate, which he ended in such horrible pains) he was far deceived. For his example hath taught all the world that those gods of his never further their worshippers in any prosperity of this life; since he that was so devout and dutiful a servant of theirs, for all that they could do, was conquered and led away captive: now if the worship of these gods return men's happiness in the life to come, why then do they calumniate the profession of the Christians, saying, that that misery fell upon the city, because it gave over the worship of the old gods, when as were it never so vowed unto their worship, yet might it taste of as much temporal misfortune as ever did Regulus: unless any man will stand in such brainless blindness against the pure truth, as to say that a whole city duly worshipping these gods cannot be miserable, when one only man may, as though the gods' power were of more ability and promptness to preserve generals, than particulars; what? doth not every multitude consist of singularities? If they say that Regulus even in all that bondage and torment might nevertheless be happy in the virtue of his constant mind, then let us rather follow the quest of that virtue by which a whole city may be made truly happy, for a city's happiness and a particular man's do not arise from any several heads: the city being nothing but a multitude of men united in one formality of religion and estate: wherefore as yet I call not Regulus's virtue into any question. It is now sufficient that his very example is of power to enforce them to confess that the worship exhibited unto the gods, aims not anyway at bodily prosperity, nor at things externally accident unto man; because that Regulus chose rather to forego all these, than to offend his gods before whom he had passed his oath. But what shall we say to these men, that dare glory that they had had one city of that quality whereof they fear to have all the rest? If they have no such fear, let them then acknowledge, that what befel Regulus, the same may befall a whole city,

though their devotion may parallel his in this worship of their gods ; and therefore let them cease to slander the times of Christianity. But seeing that our question arose about the captive Christians, let such as hereby take especial occasion to deride and scorn that saving religion, mark but this, and be silent : that if it were no disgrace unto their gods, that one of their most zealous worshippers, by keeping his oath made unto them, should be nevertheless deprived of his country, and have no place left him to retire to, but must perforce be returned to his enemies, amongst whom he had already endured a hard and wretched captivity, and was now lastly to taste of a tedious death, in most execrable, strange, and cruel torments : then, far less cause is there to accuse the name of Christ for the captivity of His saints, for that they, expecting the heavenly habitation in true faith, knew full well, that they were but pilgrims in their native soils and habitations here upon earth, and subject to all the miseries of mortality.

CHAPTER XV.

Whether the taxes that the holy virgins suffered against their wills in their captivities, could pollute the virtues of their mind.

O BUT they think they give the Christians a foul blow, when they aggravate the disgrace of their captivity, by urging the rapes which were wrought not only upon married and marriageable persons, but even upon some votaresses also : here are we not to speak of faith, or godliness, or of the virtue of chastity, but our discourse must run a narrow course, betwixt shame and reason. Nor care we so much to give an answer unto strangers in this, as to minister comfort unto our fellow-Christians. Be this therefore granted as our first position, that that power by which man liveth well, resting enthroned, and established in the mind, commands every member of the body, and the body is sanctified by the sanctification of the will : which sanctimony of the will, if it remain firm and inviolate, what way soever the body be disposed of or abused (if the party enduring this abuse cannot avoid it without an express offence), this sufferance layeth no crime upon the soul. But because everybody is subject to suffer the effects both of the fury, and the lusts of him that subdueth it, that which it suffereth in this latter kind, though it be not a destroyer of one's chastity, yet is it a procurer of one's shame : because otherwise, it might be thought, that that was suffered with the consent of the mind, which it may be could not be suffered without some delight of the flesh : and therefore as for those, who to avoid this did voluntarily destroy themselves, what human

heart can choose but pity them? yet as touching such as would not do so, fearing by avoiding others' villainy, to incur their own damnation, he that imputes this as a fault unto them, is not unguilty of the fault of folly.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of such as chose a voluntary death, to avoid the fear of pain and dishonour.

FOR if it be not lawful for a private man to kill any man, however guilty, unless the law have granted a special allowance for it, then surely whosoever kills himself is guilty of homicide: and so much the more guilty doth that killing of himself make himself, by how much the more guiltless he was in that cause for which he killed himself. For if Judas's act be worthily detested, and yet the Truth saith,¹ that by hanging of himself, he did rather augment than expiate the guilt of his wicked treachery, because his despair of God's mercy in his damnable repentance, left no place in his soul for saving repentance; how much more ought he to forbear from being cause of his own death, that hath no guilt in him worthy of such a punishment as death: for Judas in hanging himself, hanged but a wicked man and died guilty, not only of Christ's death, but of his own also: adding the wickedness of being his own death, to that other wickedness of his, for which he died.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the violent lust of the soldiers, executed upon the bodies of the captives; against their consents.

BUT why should he that hath done no man evil, do himself evil, and by destroying himself, destroy an innocent man, for fear to suffer injury by the guilt of another, and procure a sin unto himself, by avoiding the sin of another? O but his fear is, to be defiled by another's lust! tush, another's lust cannot pollute thee; if it do, it is not another's but thine own. But chastity being a virtue of the mind, and accompanied with fortitude, by which it learns rather to endure all evils, than consent to any, and no man of this fortitude and chastity, being able to dispose of his body as he list, but only of the consent and dissent of his mind; what man of wit will think he loseth his chastity, though his captived body be forcedly prostituted unto another's bestiality? If chastity were lost thus easily, it were no virtue of the mind; nor one of those goods,

¹ Math. xxvii.

whereby a man lives in goodness; but were to be reckoned amongst the goods of the body, with strength, beauty, health, and such like: which if a man do decrease in, yet it doth not follow that he decreaseth in his uprightness of life: but if chastity be of another kind, why should we endanger our bodies to no end, which fear to lose it? for if it be a good, belonging to the mind, it is not lost though the body be violated. Moreover it is the virtue of holy continency, that when it withstands the pollution of carnal concupiscence, thereby it sanctifies even the body also: and therefore when the intention stands firm, and gives no way to vicious effects, the chastity of the body is not lost, because the will remains still in the holy use, and in the power too, as far as it can. For the body is not holy in that it is whole, or untouched in every member, for it may be hurt and wounded by many other casualties: and the physician oftentimes for the preservation of the health, doth that unto the body which the eye abhors to behold. A midwife trying a certain maid's integrity of the virginal part (whether for malice, or by chance, it is uncertain), spoiled it. Now I think none so foolish as to think that this virgin lost any part of her bodily sanctity, though that part endured this breach of integrity. And therefore the intent of the mind standing firm (which firmness it is that sanctifies the body), the violence of another's lust cannot deprive so much as the body of this sanctity, because the perseverance of the mind in continency ever preserveth it. But shall we say that any woman whose corrupt mind hath broken her promise unto God, and yielded herself willingly to the lust of her deceiver (though but in purpose), is as yet holy in her body, when she hath lost that holiness of mind which sanctified her body? God forbid. And here let us learn, that the sanctity of body is no more lost, if the sanctity of mind remain (though the body be ravished), than it is kept, if the mind's holiness be polluted, though the body itself be untouched. Wherefore if there be no reason, that a woman that hath already suffered another's villainy against her own will, should destroy herself by voluntary death, how much less ought this course to be followed before there be any cause? and why should murder be committed, when the guilt which is feared (being feared from another) is as yet in doubt of event? Dare they (against whom we defend the sanctity not only of the Christian women's minds, but even of their bodies in this last captivity) contradict this clear reason, wherein we affirm, that whilst the chaste resolution is unchanged by any evil consent, the guilt is wholly the ravisher's, and no part of it imputable unto the ravished?

CHAPTER XVIII.

*Of Lucretia, that stabbed herself because Tarquin's son
had ravished her.*

THEY extol Lucretia, that noble and ancient matron of Rome, with all the lauds of chastity. This woman, having her body forcibly abused by Sextus Tarquinius, son to Tarquin the proud, she revealed this villainy of the dissolute youth unto her husband Collatinus, and to Brutus her kinsman (both noble and valorous men), binding them by oath, to revenge this wicked outrage. And then, loathing the foulness of the fact that had been committed upon her, she slew herself. What? shall we say she was an adulteress, or was she chaste? who will stand long in deciding this question? One, declaiming singularly well and truly hereof, saith thus: "O wonder! there were two, and yet but one committed the adultery," worthily and rarely spoken: intimating in this commixion, the spotted lust of the one, and the chaste will of the other; and gathering his position, not from their bodily conjunction, but from the diversity of their minds, "There were two," saith he, "yet but one committed" the adultery. But what was that then which she punished so cruelly, having not committed any fault? He was but chased out of his country, but she was slain: if it were no unchasteness in her to suffer the rape unwillingly, it was no justice in her being chaste, to make away herself willingly. I appeal to you, you laws, and judges of Rome. After any offence be committed, you will not have the offender put to death without his sentence of condemnation. Suppose then this case brought before you, and that your judgment was, that the slain woman was not only uncondemned, but chaste, unguilty, and innocent; would you not punish the doer of this deed with full severity? This deed did Lucretia, that so famous Lucretia: this Lucretia being innocent, chaste, and forcibly wronged, even by Lucretia's self was murdered: now give your sentence. But if you cannot, because the offender is absent, why then do you so extol the murder of so chaste and guiltless a woman? you cannot defend her before the infernal judges, at any hand, if they be such as your poets in their verses decipher them: for according to their judgment, she is to be placed amongst those—

" . . . Qui sibi lethum,
Insontes peperère manu, lucemque perosi
Projecère animas."

'That (guiltless) spoiled themselves through black desight:
And threw their souls to hell, through hate of light.'

Whence if she now would gladly return—

"Fata obstant, tristique palus innabilis unda
Alligat."

'Fate, and deep sins forbid their passage thence,
And Styx,' &c.

But how if she be not amongst them, as not dying guiltless, but as being privy to her own sin? what if it were so, which none could know but herself, that though Tarquinius' son offered her force, yet she herself gave a lustful consent, and after did so grieve at that, that she held it worthy to be punished with death? (though she ought not to have done so, howsoever if she thought her repentance could be any way accepted of a sort of false gods). If it be so, and that it be false that there were two and but one did the sin, but rather that both were guilty of it, the one by a violent enforcement, the other by a secret consent, then she died not innocent: and therefore her learned defenders may well say, that she is not in hell among those that destroyed themselves being guiltless. But this case is in such a strait that if the murder be extenuated, the adultery is confirmed, and if this be cleared the other is aggravated: nor is there any way out of this argument: If she be an adulteress, why is she commended? If she be chaste, why did she kill herself? But in this example of this noble woman, this is sufficient for us to confute those that being themselves far from all thought of sanctity insult over the Christian women that were forced in this last captivity: that in Lucretia's praise, it is said that "There were two," and "but one committed adultery." For they then held Lucretia for one that could not stain herself with any lascivious consent. Well then, in killing herself for suffering uncleanness, being herself unpolluted, she shewed no love unto chastity, but only discovered the infirmity of her own shame: she shamed at the filthiness that was committed upon her, though it were without her consent: and being a Roman, and covetous of glory, she feared, that if she lived still, that which she had endured by violence, should be thought to have been suffered with willingness. And therefore she thought good to shew this punishment to the eyes of men, as a testimony of her mind unto whom she could not shew her mind indeed. Blushing to be held a partaker in the fact, which being by another committed so filthily, she had endured so unwillingly. Now this course the Christian women did not take; they live still, howsoever violated: neither for all this revenge they the ruins of others upon themselves, lest they should make an addition of their own guilt unto the others', if they should go and murder themselves barbarously, because their enemies had forced them so bestially. For howsoever, they have the glory of their chastity still within them being the testimony of their conscience, this they have before the eyes of their God, and this is all they care for (having no more to look to but to do well) that they decline not from the authority of

the law divine, in any sinister endeavour to avoid the offence of mortal man's suspicion.

CHAPTER XIX.

That there is no authority which allows Christians to be their own deaths in what cause soever.

FOR it is not for nothing that we never find it commended in the holy canonical Scriptures, or but allowed, that either for attaining of immortality, or avoiding of calamity, we should be our own destructions: we are forbidden it in the law, "Thou shalt not kill:"¹ especially because it adds not "thy neighbour;" as it doth in the prohibition of false witness. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour:" yet let no man think that he is free of this latter crime, if he bear false witness against himself: because he that loves his neighbour, begins his love from himself: seeing it is written, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."² Now, if he be no less guiltless of false witness that testifieth falsely against himself, then he that doth so against his neighbour (since that in that commandment wherein false witness is forbidden, it is forbidden to be practised against one's neighbour, whence misunderstanding conceits may suppose that it is not forbidden to bear false witness against oneself), how much plainer is it to be understood, that a man may not kill himself, seeing that unto the commandment ("Thou shalt not kill") nothing being added excludes all exception both of others, and of him to whom the command is given? And therefore some would extend the extent of this precept, even unto beasts and cattle, and would have it unlawful to kill any of them. But why not unto herbs also, and all things that grow and are nourished by the earth? for though these kinds cannot be said to have sense or feeling, yet they are said to be living: and therefore they may die; and consequently by violent usage be killed. Wherefore the apostle speaking of these kind of seeds, saith thus, "Fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except (first) it die."³ And the psalmist saith, "He destroyed their vines with hail,"⁴ but what? Shall we therefore think it sin to cut up a twig, because the commandment says, "Thou shalt not kill," and so involve ourselves in the foul error of the Manichees? Wherefore setting aside these dotages, when he read this precept, "Thou shalt not kill;" if we hold it not to be meant of fruits or trees, because they are not sensitive; nor of unreasonable creatures, either going, flying, swimming or creeping, because they have no society with us in reason, which God the Creator hath not made common both to them and us;

¹ Exod. xx.

² Math. xxii.

³ 1 Cor. xv. 36.

⁴ Ps. lxxviii. 47.

and therefore by His just ordinance, their deaths and lives are both most serviceable and useful unto us; then it follows necessarily, that "thou shalt not kill," is meant only of men: "Thou shalt not kill," namely, "Neither thyself, nor another." For he that kills himself, kills no other but a man.

CHAPTER XX.

Of some sort of killing men which, notwithstanding, are no murders.

INDEED the authority of the law divine hath set down some exceptions wherein it is lawful to kill a man. But excepting those whom God commands to be slain, either by His express law, or by some particular command unto any person by any temporal occasion (and he committeth not homicide that owes his service unto him that commandeth him, being but as the sword is a help to him that useth it). And therefore those men do not break the commandment which forbiddeth killing, who do make war by the authority of God's command, or being in some place of public magistracy, do put to death malefactors according to their laws, that is, according to the rule of justice and reason. Abraham was not only freed from being blamed as a murderer, but he was also commended as a godly man in that he would have killed his son Isaac, not in wickedness, but in obedience. And it is a doubtful question, whether it be to be held as a command from God that Jephthah killed his daughter that met him on his return, seeing that he had vowed to sacrifice the first living thing that came out of his house to meet him, when he returned conqueror from the wars.¹ Nor could Samson be excused pulling down the house upon himself and his enemies, but that the spirit within him, which wrought miracles by him, did prompt him unto this act. Those therefore being excepted, which either the justice of the law, or the fountain of all justice, God's particular command, would have killed; he that killeth either himself, or any other, incurreth the guilt of a homicide.

CHAPTER XXI.

That voluntary death can never be any sign of magnanimity or greatness of spirit.

WHOSOEVER have committed this homicide upon themselves, may (perhaps) be commended of some for their greatness of spirit, but never for

¹ Gen. xxii. ; Judges xi. 30-31.

their soundness of judgment. But indeed if you look a little deeper into the matter, it cannot be rightly termed magnanimity, when a man being unable to endure either casual miseries, or other oppressions (to avoid them) destroyeth himself. For that mind discovereth itself to be of the greatest infirmity, that can neither endure hard bondage in his body, or the fond opinion of the vulgar: and worthily is that spirit entitled great, that can rather endure calamities than avoid them: and in respect of their own purity and enlightened conscience, can set at nought the trivial censures of mortal men, which are most commonly enclouded in a mist of ignorance and error. If we shall think it a part of magnanimity to put a man's self to death, then is Cleombrotus most worthy of this magnanimous title, who having read Plato's book "Of the immortality of the soul," cast himself headlong from the top of a wall, and so leaving this life, went unto another which he believed was better. For neither calamity, nor guiltiness, either true or false, urged him to avoid it by destroying himself, but his great spirit alone was sufficient to make him catch at his death, and break all the pleasing fetters of this life. Which deed notwithstanding, that it was rather great than good, Plato himself, whom he read, might have assured him; who (be sure) would have done it, or taught it himself, if he had not discerned by the same instinct whereby he discerned the soul's eternity, that this was at no hand to be practised, but rather utterly prohibited.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of Cato, who killed himself, being not able to endure Cæsar's victory.

BUT many have killed themselves for fear to fall into the hands of their foes. We dispute not here *de facto*, whether it hath been done or no, but *de jure*, whether it were to be done or no. For sound reasons before example, all authorities to the contrary, as whereunto all examples do consent, being such as by their excellence in goodness are worthily imitable: neither patriarch, prophet, nor apostle ever did this: yet our Lord Jesus Christ, when He admonished His disciples,¹ in persecution to flee from city to city, might have willed them in such cases to make a present despatch of themselves, and so to avoid their persecutors (had He held it fit). But if He never gave any such admonition, or command, that any to whom He promised a mansion of eternity at their deaths, should pass unto their deaths on this fashion; (let then the heathen that know not God produce all

¹ Math. x. 23.

they can) it is plainly unlawful for anyone that serveth the only true God to follow this course: but, indeed, besides Lucretia¹ (of whom, I think, we have sufficiently argued before) it is hard for them to find one other example, worth prescribing as a fit authority for others to follow, besides that Cato only that killed himself at Utica: not that he alone was his own deaths-man, but because he was accounted as a learned, and honest man, which may beget a belief, that to do as he did, were to do well. What should I say of his act more than his friends (and some of them learned men) have said? who shewed far more judgment in dissuading the deed, and censuring it as the effect of a spirit rather dejected, than magnanimous. And of this did Cato himself leave a testimony in his own famous son. For if it were base to live under Cæsar's victory: why did he advise his son to this, willing him to entertain a full hope of Cæsar's clemency? Yea, why did he not urge him to go willingly to his end with him? If it were laudable in Torquatus to kill his son that had fought and foiled his enemy: (though herein he had broken the Dictator's command) why did conquered Cato spare his overthrown son, that spared not himself? Was it more vile to be a conqueror against law, than to endure a conqueror against honour? What shall we say then, but that even in the same measure that he loved his son, whom he both hoped and wished that Cæsar would spare, in the same did he envy Cæsar's glory, which he should have got in sparing of him also, or else (to mollify this matter somewhat) he was ashamed to receive such courtesy at Cæsar's hands.

CHAPTER XXIII.

That the Christians excel Regulus in that virtue, wherein he excelled most.

BUT those whom we oppose will not have their Cato excelled by our Job, that holy man, who chose rather to endure all these horrible torments in his flesh, than by adventuring upon death to avoid all those vexations: and other saints of high credit and undoubted faith in our scriptures, all which made choice rather to endure the tyranny of their enemies, than be their own butchers. But now we will prove out of their own records that Regulus was Cato's better in this glory. For Cato never overcame Cæsar, unto whom he scorned to be subject, and chose to murder himself rather than be servant unto him. But Regulus overcame the Africans, and in his generalship, returned with

¹Cap. 19.

diverse noble victories unto the Romans, never with any notable loss of his citizens, but always of his foes : and yet being afterwards conquered by them, he resolved rather to endure slavery under them, than by death to free himself from them. And therein he both preserved his patience under the Carthaginians, and his constancy unto the Romans, neither depriving the enemy of his conquered body, nor his countrymen of his unconquered mind : neither was it the love of this life that kept him from death. This he gave good proof of, when, without dread, he returned back unto his foes, to whom he had given worse cause of offence in the senate house with his tongue than ever he had done before in the battle with his force : and therefore, this so great a conqueror and contemner of this life, who had rather that his foes should take it from him by any torments, than that he should give death to himself, howsoever, must needs hold, that it was a foul guilt for man to be his own murderer. Rome, amongst all her worthies, and eternized spirits, cannot show one better than he was, for he, for all his great victories, continued most poor : nor could mishap amate him : for with a fixed, resolved, and an undaunted courage, returned he unto his deadliest enemies. Now, if those magnanimous and heroicall defenders of their earthly habitacles, and those true and sound servants of their indeed false gods (who had power to cut down their conquered foes by law of arms), seeing themselves afterwards to be conquered of their foes, nevertheless would not be their own butchers, but although they feared not death at all, yet would rather endure to be slaves to their foe's superiority, than to be their own executioners : how much more then should the Christians, that adore the true God, and aim wholly at the eternal dwellings, restrain themselves from this foul wickedness, whensoever it pleaseth God to expose them for a time to taste of temporal extremities, either for their trial, or for correction sake, seeing that He never forsaketh them in their humiliation, for whom He, being most high, humbled Himself so low : specially seeing that they are persons whom no laws of arms or military power can allow to destroy the conquered enemies ?

CHAPTER XXIV.

That sin is not to be avoided by sin.

WHAT a pernicious error then is here crept into the world, that a man should kill himself, because either his enemy had injured him, or means to injure him ? whereas he may not kill his enemy, whether he have offended him, or be about to offend him ? This is rather to be feared indeed, that the body, being subject unto the enemy's lust, with touch

of some enticing delight do not allure the will to consent to this impurity : and therefore (say they) it is not because of another's guilt, but for fear of one's own, that such men ought to kill themselves before sin be committed upon them. Nay, the mind that is more truly subject unto God and His wisdom, than unto carnal concupiscence will never be brought to yield unto the lust of its own flesh be it never so provoked by the lust of another's : but if it be a damnable fact, and a detestable wickedness to kill oneself at all (as the truth in plain terms saith it is), what man will be so fond as to say, Let us sin now, lest we sin hereafter? let us commit murder now, lest we fall into adultery hereafter? If wickedness be so predominant in such an one, as he or she will not choose rather to suffer in innocence than to escape by guilt, is it not better to adventure on the uncertainty of the future adultery, than the certainty of the present murder? is it not better to commit such a sin as repentance may purge, than such an one as leaves no place at all for repentance? This I speak for such as for avoiding of guilt (not in others but in themselves) and fearing to consent to the lust in themselves which another's lust inciteth, do imagine that they ought rather to endure the violence of death : but far be it from a Christian soul that trusteth in his God, that hopeth in Him and resteth on Him ; far be it (I say) from such, to yield unto the delights of the flesh in any consent unto uncleanness. But if that concupiscential disobedience which dwelleth as yet in our dying flesh, do stir itself by its own licence against the law of our will ; how can it be but faultless in the body of him or her that never consenteth, when it stirs without guilt in the body that sleepeth.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of some unlawful acts, done by the saints, and by what occasion they were done.

BUT there were some holy women (say they) in these times of persecution, who, flying from the spoilers of their chastities, threw themselves headlong into a swift river which drowned them, and so they died, and yet their martyrdoms are continually honoured with religious memorials in the Catholic Church. Well, of these I dare not judge rashly in anything. Whether the Church have any sufficient testimonies that the divine will advised it to honour these persons' memories, I cannot tell ; it may be that it hath. For what if they did not this through mortal fear, but through heavenly instinct? not in error, but in obedience? as we must not believe but that Samson did? And if God command, and this command be clearly and doubtlessly discerned to be His, who

ares call this obedience into question? Who dare calumniate the duty of holy love? But every one that shall resolve to sacrifice his son unto God shall not be cleared of guilt in such a resolution, because Abraham was praised for it. For the soldier, that in his order and obedience to his governor (under whom he fighteth lawfully) killeth a man, the city never makes him guilty of homicide: nay it makes him guilty of falsehood and contempt if he do not labour in all that he can do it. But if he had killed the man of his own voluntary pleasure, then had he been guilty of shedding human blood, and so he is punished for doing of that unbidden, for the not doing of which being done he should also have been punished. If this be thus at the general's command, then why not at the Creator's? He, therefore, that heareth said, "thou shalt not kill thyself," must kill himself if he command him, whom we may no way gainsay: only he is to mark whether this divine command be not involved in any uncertainty. By the ear we do make conjecture of the conscience, but our judgment cannot penetrate into the secrets of hearts: "No man knows the things of a man, but the spirit of a man which is in him."¹ This we say, this we affirm, this we universally approve, that no man ought to procure his own death for fear of temporal miseries; because in doing this he falleth into eternal: either may he do it to avoid the sins of others, for in this he maketh himself guilty of a deadly guilt, whom others' wickedness could not make guilty: nor for his own sins past, for which he had more need to wish for life, that he might repent himself of them: nor for any desire of a better life to be hoped for after death: because such as are guilty of the loss of their own life, never enjoy any better life after their death.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Whether we ought to fly sin with voluntary death.

HERE is one reason of this proposition as yet to handle, which seems to prove it commodious for a man to suffer a voluntary death: namely, that either alluring pleasures or tormenting pains should enforce him to sin afterwards. Which reason if we will give scope unto, it will run out so far, that one would think that men should be exhorted to this voluntary witchery, even then, when by the fount of regeneration they are purified from all their sins. For then is the time to beware of all sins to come, when all that is past is pardoned. And if voluntary death do this, why is it not fittest then? Why doth he that is newly baptised forbear his own throat? Why doth he thrust his head freed again into all these

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 11.

imminent dangers of this life, seeing he may so easily avoid them all by his death ; and it is written, " He that loveth danger shall fall therein " ? ¹ Why then doth he love those innumerable dangers ? or if he do not love them, why undertakes he them ? Is any man so fondly perverse and so great a contemner of truth, that if he think one should kill himself to eschew the violence of one oppressor lest it draw him into sin, will nevertheless avouch that one should live still, and endure this whole world at all times, full of all temptations, both such as may be expected from one oppressor, and thousands besides without which no man doth nor can live ? What is the reason then, why we do spend so much time in our exhortations, endeavouring to animate those whom we have baptised, either into virginity, or chaste widowhood, or honest and honourable marriage ; seeing we have both far shorter and far better ways to abandon all contagion and danger of sin ; namely in persuading every one presently after that remission of his sins which he hath newly obtained in baptism, to betake him presently to a speedy death, and so send him presently away unto God, both fresh and fair ? If any man think that this is fit to be persuaded, I say not he dotes, but I say he is plain mad ; with what face can he say unto a man, kill thyself, lest unto thy small sins thou add a greater by living in slavery unto a barbarous unchaste master ? how can he (but with guilty shame) say unto a man : kill thyself now that thy sins are forgiven thee, lest thou fall into the like again or worse, by living in this world, so fraught with manifold temptation, so alluring with unclean delights, so furious with bloody sacrileges, so hateful with errors and terrors ? it is a shame and a sin to say the one, and therefore is it so likewise to do the other. For if there were any reason of just force to authorise this fact, it must needs be that which is fore-alleged. But it is not that, therefore there is none. Loathe not your lives then (you faithful of Christ) though the foe hath made havoc of your chastities. You have a great and true consolation, if your conscience bear you faithful witness that you never consented unto their sins who were suffered to commit such outrages upon you.

CHAPTER XXVII.

How it was a judgment of God that the enemy was permitted to exercise his lust upon the Christian bodies.

If you ask me now why these outrages were thus permitted, I answer the providence of the Creator and governor of the world is high, and His judgments are unsearchable "and His ways past finding out : " ² but as

¹ Eccl. iii. 27.

² Rom. xi. 33.

your own hearts sincerely whether you have boasted in this good of continency and chastity, or no? whether you have not affected human commendations for it, and so thereby have envied it in others? I do not accuse you of that whereof I am ignorant, nor do I know what answer your hearts will return you unto this question. But if they answer affirmatively, and say you have done so, then wonder not at all that you have now lost that, whereby you did but seek and rejoice to please the eyes of mortal men: and that you lost not that which could not be shewed unto men. If you consented not unto the other's luxury, your souls had the help of God's grace to keep them from loss, and likewise felt the disgrace of human glory, to deter them from the love of it. But your faint hearts are comforted on both sides: on this side being approved, and on that side chastised: justified on this, and reformed on the other. But their hearts that give them answer that they never gloried in the guilt of virginity, vidual chastity, or continence in marriage: but sorting themselves with the meanest,¹ did with a reverend fear² rejoice in this gift of God; nor ever repined at the like excellence of sanctity and purity in others; but neglecting the air of human fame (which always is wont to accrue according to the rarity of the virtue that deserves it), did wish rather to have their number multiplied, than by reason of their fewness to become more eminent. Let not those that are such (if the barbarian's lust have seized upon some of them) allege that this is (merely) permitted: nor let them think that God neglects these things because He sometimes permits that which no man ever commits unpunished: for some, as weights of sin and evil desires, are let down by a present and secret judgment, and some are reserved to that public and universal last judgment. And perhaps those, who knew themselves not guilty, and that never had their hearts puffed up with the good of this chastity (and yet had their bodies thus abused by the enemy) had (notwithstanding) some infirmity lurking within them which if they had escaped, this humiliation by the war's fury might have increased unto a fastidious pride. Wherefore as some were taken away by death, "lest wickedness should alter their understandings," so these here were forced to forego something, lest excess of prosperity should have depraved their virtuous modesty. And therefore, from neither sort, either of those that were proud, in that their bodies were pure from all unclean touch of others, or that might have grown proud, if they had escaped the rape done by their foes, from neither of these is their chastity taken away, but unto them both is humility persuaded. The glory which is imminent in the one, and imminent over the other, was excluded in them both. Though this is not to be overpassed with

¹ Rom. xii. 16.² Psal. ii. 11.

silence, that some that endured these violences, might perhaps think, that continency is but a bodily good, remaining as long as the body remains untouched, but that it is not solely placed in the strength of the grace-assisted will, which sanctifies both body and soul: nor that it is a good that cannot be lost against one's will: which error, this affliction brought them to understand: for it they consider with what conscience they honour God, and do with an unmoved faith believe this of Him, that He will not, nay cannot any way forsake such as thus and thus do serve Him, and invoke His name, and do not doubt of the great acceptation which He vouchsafes unto chastity. Then must they need perceive that it follows necessarily, that He would never suffer this to fall upon His Saints, if that by this means they should be despoiled of that sanctimony which He so much affects in them, and infuses into them.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

What the servants of Christ may answer the infidels, when they upbraid them with Christ's not delivering them (in their afflictions) from the fury of their enemies' fury.

WHEREFORE all the servants of the great and true God have a comfort that is firm and fixed, not placed upon frail foundations of momentary and transitory things: and so they pass this temporal life in such manner, as they never need repent them of enjoying it: because that herein they are prepared for that which is eternal, using the goods of this world but as in a pilgrimage, being no way entrapped in them, and so making use of the evils of this world, as they make them serve always either to their approbation, or their reformation. Those that insult upon this their uprightness, and (when they see them fallen into some of these temporal inconveniences) say unto them, Where is thy God?¹ Let them tell us, where their gods are when they are afflicted with the like oppressions? their gods, which either they worship, or desire to worship, only for the avoiding of such inconveniences. The family of Christ can answer, My God is everywhere present, in all places, whole and powerful, no space includes Him; He can be present, unperceived, and depart away again, unmoved. And He, when He afflicts us with these adversities, doth it either for trial of our perfections or reforming of our imperfections, still reserving an eternal reward for our patient sufferance of temporal distresses. But who are you, that I should vouchsafe to speak unto you, especially of your gods, but most especially of mine own God who is "terrible and to be feared above all gods? for all the gods of the heathen are devils, but the Lord made the heavens." ²

¹ Ps. xlii. 3.

² Ps. xcvi. 4, 5.

CHAPTER XXIX.

That such as complain of the Christian times desire nothing but to live in filthy pleasures.

IF that your Scipio Nasica were now alive, he that was once your high priest, who (when in the fearful terror of the Carthaginian wars, the most perfect man of all the city was sought for, to undertake the entertainment of the Phrygian goddess) was chosen by the whole Senate, he whose face perhaps you durst not look on, he would shame you from this gross impudence of yours. For what cause is there for you to exclaim at the prosperity of the Christian faith in these times, but only because you would follow your luxury uncontrolled, and having removed the impediments of all troublesome oppositions, swim on in your dishonest and unhallowed dissolution? Your affections do not stand up for peace, nor for universal plenty and prosperity, to the end that you might use them when you have them, as honest men should do; that is, modestly, soberly, temperately, and religiously: no; but that hence you might keep up your unreasonable expense, in seeking out such infinite variety of pleasures, and so give birth unto those exorbitances in your prosperities, which would heap more mischiefs upon you than ever befell you by your enemies.

But Scipio, your high priest, he whom the whole Senate judged the best man amongst you, fearing that this calamity would fall upon you (that I speak of) would not have Carthage in those days the sole parallel of the Roman Empire, utterly subverted, but contradicted Cato, that spoke for the destruction of it, because he feared the foe of all weak spirits, *security*; and held that Carthage would be unto his fellow citizens (as if they were young punies), both a convenient tutor, and a necessary terror. Nor did his judgment delude him: the event itself gave sufficient proof whether he spoke true or no: for afterwards when Carthage was razed down, and the greatest curber and terror of the Roman weal-public utterly extinguished and brought to nothing; presently such an innumerable swarm of inconveniences arose out of this prosperous estate, that the bonds of concord being all rent asunder and broken, first with barbarous and bloody seditions, and next by continual giving of worse and worse causes by civil wars, such slaughters were effected, so much blood was shed by civil wars, and so much inhumanity was practised in proscribings, riots, and rapines, that those Romans that in the good time of their lives feared no hurt but from their enemies, now in the corrupt time of their lives endured far worse of their own fellows: and that lust after sovereignty, which among all other sins of the world, was most appropriate unto the Romans, and

most immoderate in them all, at length getting head and happy success in a few of the more powerful, it overpressed all the rest, wearing them out, and crushing their necks with the yoke of wild and slavish bondage.

CHAPTER XXX.

By what degrees of corruption the Romans' ambition grew to such a height.

FOR when did ever this lust of sovereignty cease in proud minds, until it had by continuance of honours attained unto the dignity of regal domination? And if their ambition did not prevail, they then had no means to continue their honours: now ambition would not prevail but amongst a people wholly corrupted with covetousness and luxury. And the people are always infected with these two contagions, by the means of affluent prosperity, which Nasica did wisely hold fit to be foreseen and prevented, by not condescending to the abolishing of so strong, so powerful, and so rich a city of their enemies; thereby to keep luxury in awful fear: that so it might not become exorbitant, and by that means also covetousness might be repressed. Which two vices once chained up, virtue, the city's supporter, might flourish, and a liberty befitting this virtue might stand strong. And hence it was, out of this most circumspect zeal unto his country, that your said high priest, who was chosen by the Senate of those times for the best man, without any difference of voices (a thing worthy of often repetition), when the Senate would have built a theatre, dissuaded them from this vain resolution: and in a most grave oration, persuaded them not to suffer the luxury of the Greeks to creep into their old conditions, nor to consent unto the entry of foreign corruption, to the subversion and extirpation of their native Roman perfection, working so much by his own only authority, that the whole bench of the judicious Senate being moved by his reasons, expressly prohibited the use of those movable seats which the Romans began as then to use in the beholding of plays. How earnest would he have been to have cleansed the city of Rome of the plays themselves, if he durst have opposed their authority whom he held for gods, being ignorant that they were malicious devils: or if he knew it, then it seems he held that they were rather to be pleased than despised. For as yet, that heavenly doctrine was not delivered unto the world, which, purifying the heart by faith, changes the effect, with a zealous piety to desire and aim at the blessings of heaven, or those which are above the heavens, and frees men absolutely from the slavery of those proud and ungracious devils.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of the first inducing of stage-plays.

BUT know (you that know not this) and mark (you that make show as if you knew it not, and murmur at Him that hath set you free from such lords) that your stage-plays, those spectacles of uncleanness, those licentious vanities, were not first brought up at Rome by the corruptions of the men, but by the direct commands of your gods. It were far more tolerable for you to give divine honours unto the forenamed Scipio, than unto such kind of deities, for they were not so good as their priest was. And now do but observe, whether your minds being drunk with this continual ingurgitation of error, will suffer you to taste a sip of any true consideration. Your gods, for the assuaging of the infection of the pestilence that seized on their bodies, commanded an institution of stage-plays presently to be effected in their honours: but your priest, for avoiding the pestilence of your minds, forbade that any stage should be built for any such action. If you have so much wit as to prefer the mind before the body, then choose which of the two said parties to make your god of: for the bodily pestilence did not yet cease, because that the delicate vanity of stage-plays entered into the ears of this people (being then wholly given unto wars, and accustomed only to the Circensian plays), but the wily devils foreseeing (by natural reason) that this plague of the bodies should cease, by this means took occasion to thrust one far worse, not into their bodies, but into their manners, in corrupting of which lieth all their joy; and such a plague, as blinded the minds of that wretched people with such impenetrable clouds of darkness, and bespotted them with such foul stains of deformity, that even now (though this may seem incredible to succeeding ages) when this great Rome was destroyed, such as were possessed with this pestilence, flying from that sack, could come even unto Carthage, and here contend who should run maddest after stage-playing.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of some vices in the Romans, which their city's ruin did never reform.

O you senseless men, how are you bewitched, not with error but furor, that when all the nations of the East (as we hear) bewail your city's ruin, and all the most remote regions bemoan your misery with public

sorrow, you yourselves run headlong into the theatres, seeking them, entering them, filling them, and playing far madder parts now than ever you did before? This your plague of mind, this your wrack of honesty, was that, which your Scipio so feared when he would not have any theatres built for you: when he saw how quickly your virtues would be abolished by prosperity, when he would not have you utterly quitted from all fear of foreign invasions. He was not of opinion that that common weal or city was in a happy estate, where the walls stood firm, and the good manners lay ruined. But the seducements of the damned spirits prevailed more with you, than the providence of circumspect men. And hence comes it, that the mischiefs that yourselves commit, you are so loth should be imputed to yourselves, but the mischiefs that yourselves suffer, you are ever ready to cast upon the Christian profession, for you in your security do not seek the peace of the common weal, but freedom for your practices of luxury: you are depraved by prosperity, and you cannot be reformed by adversity. Your Scipio would have had you to fear your foes, and so to suppress your lusts: but you, though you feel your foes, and are crushed down by them, yet will not restrain your inordinate affects: you have lost the benefit of affliction, and though you be made most miserable, yet remain you most irreformable. And yet it is God's mercy that you have your lives still: His very sparing of your lives, summons you unto repentance: He it was, that (though you be ungrateful) showed you that favour as to escape your enemies' swords by calling of yourselves His servants, or flying into the churches of His martyrs.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of the clemency of God in moderating this calamity of Rome.

It is said that Romulus and Remus built a sanctuary, whereunto who-so could escape, should be free from all assault or hurt: their endeavour in this being to increase the number of their citizens. An example making way for a wonderful honour unto Christ: the same thing, that the founders of the city did decree, the same do the destroyers of it: and what if the one did it to increase the multitude of their citizens, when the other did it to preserve the multitude of their foes? Let this then (and whatsoever besides fitly may be so used), be used as an answer of our Lord Jesus Christ's flock, and that pilgrim city of God, unto all their wicked enemies.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of such of God's elect as live secretly as yet amongst the infidels, and of such as are false Christians.

AND let this city of God's remember, that even amongst her enemies, there are some concealed, that shall one day be her citizens: nor let her think it a fruitless labour to bear their hate until she hear their confession, as she hath also (as long as she is in this pilgrimage of this world) some that are partakers of the same sacraments with her, that shall not be partakers of the saints' glories with her, who are partly known, and partly unknown. Yea such there are, that spare not amongst God's enemies to murmur against His glory, whose character they bear upon them: going now unto plays with them, and by and by, unto the church with us. But let us not despair of the reformation of some of these, we have little reason, seeing that we have many secret and predestinated friends, even amongst our most known adversaries, and such, as yet know not themselves to be ordained for our friendship. For the two cities (of the predestinate and the reprobate) are in this world, confused together, and commixed, until the general judgment make a separation: of the original progress and due limits of both which cities, what I think fit to speak, by God's help and furtherance, I will now begin, to the glory of the city of God, which being compared with her contrary, will spread her glories to a more full aspect.

CHAPTER XXXV.

What subjects are to be handled in the following discourse.

BUT we have a little more to say unto those that lay the afflictions of the Roman estate upon the profession of Christianity, which forbiddeth men to sacrifice unto those idols. For we must cast up a sum of all the miseries (or of as many as shall suffice) which that city, or the provinces under her subjection, endured before those sacrifices were forbidden. All which they would have imputed unto our religion, had it been then preached and taught against these sacrifices, when these miseries befell. Secondly, we must show what customs and conditions the true God vouchsafed to teach them for the increasing of their empire, that God, in whose hand are all the kingdoms of the earth: and how their false gods never helped them a jot, but rather did them infinite hurt by deceit and inducement. And lastly, we will disprove those who though they be confuted with most manifest proofs, yet will needs affirm still that their gods are to be worshipped, and that not for

the benefits of this life, but for those which are belonging to the life to come. Which question (unless I be deceived) will be far more laborious, and worthier of deeper consideration, in the which we must dispute against the philosophers, not against each one, but even the most excellent and glorious of them all, and such as in many points hold as we hold, and namely of the immortality of the soul, and of the world's creation by the true God, and of His providence, whereby He swayeth the whole creation. But because even these also are to be confuted, in what they hold opposite unto us, we thought it our duty not to be slack in this work, but convincing all the contradictions of the wicked, as God shall give us power and strength to advance the verity of the city of God, the true zeal and worship of God, which is the only way to attain true and eternal felicity. This therefore shall be the method of our work : and now from this second *exordium* we will take each thing in due order.





THE SECOND BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

Of the method which must of necessity be used in this disputation.

[F the weak custom of human sense durst not be so bold as to oppose itself against the reasons of apparent truth, but would yield this languid infirmity unto wholesome instruction, as unto a medicine which were fittest to apply, until by God's good assistance, and faith's operation, it were thoroughly cured ; then those that can both judge well, and instruct sufficiently, should not need many words to confute any erroneous opinion, or to make it fully apparent unto such, as their desires would truly inform. But now, because there is so great and inveterate a disease rooted in the minds of the ignorant, that they will (out of their extreme blindness, whereby they see not what is most plain, or out of their obstinate perverseness, whereby they will not brook what they see) defend their irrational and brutish opinions, after that the truth has been taught them as plain as one man can teach another : hence it is that there ariseth a necessity that bindeth us to dilate more fully of what is already most plain, and to give the truth, not unto their eyes to see, but even into their heads, as it were to touch and feel. Yet, notwithstanding, this by the way : What end shall we make of alteration if we hold that the answerers are continually to be answered ? For, as for those that either cannot comprehend what is said unto them, or else are so obstinate in their vain opinions, that though they do understand the truth, yet will not give it place in their minds, but reply against it, as it is written of them, "like spectators of iniquity," those are eternally frivolous : and if we should bind ourselves to give an answer to every contradiction that their impudence will thrust forth (how falsely they are not, for they do but make a show of opposition unto our assertions), you see what a trouble it would be, how endless, and how fruitless. And therefore (son Marcelline) I would neither have you, nor any other (to whom this our work may yield any benefit in Jesus Christ) to

read this volume with any surmise that I am bound to answer whatsoever you or they shall hear objected against it : lest you become like unto the women of whom the apostle saith, that they were "always learning, and never able to come unto the knowledge of the truth." ¹

CHAPTER II.

A repetition of the contents of the first book.

THEREFORE in the former book, wherein I began to speak of the city of God, to which purpose all the whole work (by God's assistance) shall have reference, I did first of all take in hand to give them their answer that are so shameless as to impute the calamities inflicted upon the world (and in particular upon Rome in her last desolation wrought by the Vandals) unto the religion of Christ, which forbids men to offer service or sacrifice unto devils : whereas they are rather bound to ascribe this as a glory to Christ that, for His name's sake alone, the barbarous nations (beyond all practice and custom of wars) allowed many and spacious places of religion for those (ungrateful men) to escape into ; and gave such honour unto the servants of Christ, not only to the true ones, but even to the counterfeit, that what the law of arms made lawful to do unto all men, they held it utterly unlawful to offer unto them. And hence arose these questions : "How and wherefore these gracious mercies of God were extended unto such ungodly and ungrateful wretches as well as to His true servants?" and "Why the afflictions of this siege fell upon the godly (in part) as well as on the reprobate?" For the better dissolving of which doubts, I stayed somewhat long in a discourse of the daily gifts of God, and the miseries of man, falling out in the whole tract of this transitory life (both which, by reason that they often light confusedly together, alike, and undistinguished both upon good livers and impious, are very powerful in moving the hearts of many) : and mine especial intent herein was to give some comfort unto the sanctified and chaste women, who had their chastities offended by some incontinent acts of the soldiers : and to show them that if those accidents had not wrecked their chaste resolutions, they ought not to be ashamed of life, having no guilt in them whereof to be ashamed, and then I took occasion to speak somewhat against those that in such villainous and impudent manner do insult over the poor Christians in their adversities, and chiefly over the deflowered women ; these fellows themselves being most unmanly and depraved wretches, altogether degenerate from the true Romans, unto whose honours (being many, and much recorded) these base creatures

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 7.

so directly opposite. For it was these that made Rome, which was first founded, and after increased by the care and industry of her old worthies, to show more filthy and corrupted in her prosperity, than she was now in her ruin : for in this, there fell but stones, walls, and houses ; but in the lives of such villains as these, all the monuments, all the ornaments (not of their walls, but) of their manners, were utterly demolished, as then did a worse fire burn in their affections than this was now that did but burn their houses : with the close of this, I gave an end to the first book, and now (as I resolved) will proceed to cast up a reckoning of the sundry mischiefs that this city of Rome hath suffered since she was first founded, either in herself, or in some of the provinces under her command : all which those vile persons would have pinned upon the back of Christianity, if the doctrine of the gospel against their false and deceitful gods had in those times been revealed and preached.

CHAPTER III.

Of the choice of an history which will show the miseries that the Romans endured, when they worshipped their idols, before the increase of Christian religion.

BUT remember this, that when I handled those points, I had to do with the ignorant, out of whose blockish heads this proverb was first born : "It will not rain because of the Christian." For there are some others amongst them that are learned, and love that very history that makes these things plain to their understanding : but because they love to set the blind and erroneous vulgar at enmity and dissension with us Christians, they dissemble and conceal this understanding of theirs, labouring to persuade the people this, that the whole process of calamities, which at diverse times and in several places fell and were still to fall upon all the world, had the original, and have had, only and entirely from the profession of Christ, grieving that it spreadeth so far, and shineth so gloriously against all other their gods and religions. But at these malicious men read but with us, with what excess of affliction the Roman estate was wrung and plagued, and that on every side, before that ever this name (which they so much do envy) did spread the glory to such note : and then if they can, let them defend their gods' goodnesses shown unto them in these extremities, and if that as their servants they honour them for protection from these extremities, which if they do but suffer now in any part, they are ready to lay all the blame upon our necks, for why did their gods permit their servants to be plagued with these great afflictions (which I am now to recount) before that the publishing of the name of Christ gave them cause of offence, by prohibiting their sacrifices.

CHAPTER IV.

That the worshippers of Pagan gods never received honest instruction from them ; but used all filthiness in their sacrifices.

FIRST, why would not their gods have a care to see their servants well mannered : the true God doth worthily neglect those that neglect His just worship : but as for those gods whom this wicked and ungrateful crew complain that they are forbidden to worship, why do they not help to better the lives of their worshippers by giving them some good laws ? It was very requisite that as they carefully attended their gods' sacrifices, so their gods should have graciously amended their imperfections. Aye (but will some say), every man may be vicious at his own will and pleasure. True ; who denies that ? Yet notwithstanding, it was the part of these great gods' guardians, not to conceal the forms and rudiments of good and honest life from their suppliants ; but to teach them plain, and fully, and by their prophets, to correct and restrain the offenders : to restrain evil doers with public punishments, and to encourage good livers with full rewards : what temple of all this multitude of gods, was ever accessory to any such sound ? We ourselves (once in our youth) went to view these spectacles, their sacrilegious mockeries ; there we saw the enthusiasts, persons rapt with fury ; there we heard the pipers, and took great delight in the filthy sports that they acted before their gods and goddesses : even before Berecynthia (surnamed the celestial virgin, and mother to all the gods), even before her litter, upon the feast day of her very purification, their beastly stage-players acted such ribaldry, as was a shame (not only for the mother of the gods, but) for the mother of any senator or any honest man, nay, even for the mothers of the players themselves to give ear to. Natural shame hath bound us with some respect unto our parents, which vice itself cannot abolish. But that beastliness of obscene speeches and actions, which the players acted in public, before the mother of all the gods, and in sight and hearing of a huge multitude of both sexes, they would be ashamed to act at home in private before their mothers, were it but for repetition sake. And as for that company that were their spectators, though they might easily be drawn thither by curiosity, yet beholding chastity so foully injured, methinks they should have been driven from thence by the mere shame that immodesty can offend honesty withal. What can sacrileges be if those were sacrifices ? or what can be pollution if this were a purification ? and these were called *juncates*, as if they made a feast where all the unclean devils of hell might fill their bellies. For who knows not what kind of spirits these are that take pleasure in these obscurities ? unless he know not that there be any such unclean

spirits that thus illude men under the names of gods : or else, unless he be such an one as wisheth the pleasure, and fears the displeasure of those damned powers more than he doth the love and wrath of the true and everliving God.

CHAPTER V.

Of the obscenities used in these sacrifices offered unto the mother of the gods.

NOR will I stand to the judgment of those whom I know do rather delight in the vicious custom of enormities than decline from it : I will leave Scipio Nasica himself to be judge, and he whom the whole senate proclaimed for their best man, one whose only hands were thought fit to receive and bring in this devil's picture : let him but tell us first whether that he desire that his mother's deserts were such that the senate should appoint him divine honours (as we read that both the Greeks and other Roman nations, also have ordained for some particular men whose worth they held in high esteem, and whose persons they thought were made immortal, and admitted amongst the gods). Truly he would gladly wish his mother this felicity, if that such a thing could be. But if we ask him then further, whether he would have such filthy representations as Cibelus enacted as parts of his mother's honours ; could he not avow (think you) that he had rather have his mother lie dead and senseless, than to live a goddess, to hear and allow such baldry ? Yes : far be it from such a worthy senator of Rome, as would forbid the building of a theatre in a State maintained by valour, to wish his mother that worship to please her goddess-ship, which could not but offend all womanhood. Nor is it possible that he could be persuaded, that divinity could so far alter the laudable modesty of a woman, as to make her allow her servants to call upon her in such immodest terms, as being spoken in the hearing of any living woman, if she stop not her ears and get her gone, the whole kindred of her father, husband, children, and all would blush, and be ashamed at her shamefulness. And therefore such a mother of the gods as this (whom even the worst man would shame to have his mother alike unto) did never seek the best man of Rome (in her entrance into the people's affections) to make him better by her counsels and admonitions, but rather worse, by her receipts and illusions (like her of whom it is written, " A woman hunteth for the precious life of a man "¹) : that his great spirit being elevated by this (as it were divine) testimony of the senate he holding himself solely the best, might be thus withdrawn from the truth of religion and godliness : without which, the worthiest wit is ever overthrown and extin-

¹ Prov. vi. 26.

guished in pride and vainglory, what intent then (save deceit) had she in selecting the best and most honest man, seeing she useth and desireth such things in her sacrifices as honest men abhor to use, were it but even in their sports and recreations?

CHAPTER VI.

That the Pagans' gods did never establish the doctrine of living well.

HENCE it proceedeth that those gods never had care of the lives and manners of such cities and nations as gave them divine honours: but contrariwise gave free permission to such horrible and abominable evils, to enter, not upon their lands, vines, houses, or treasures, no nor upon the body (which serves the mind), but upon the mind itself, the ruler of all the flesh, and of all the rest: this they ever allowed without any prohibition at all. If they did prohibit it, lest it be proved that they did. I know their followers will talk of certain secret traditions and I know not what, some closely muttered instructions, tending to the bettering of man's life, but let them show wherever they had any public places ordained for to hear such lectures (wherein the players did not present their filthy gesture and speeches: nor where the *Fugalia* were kept with all licentiousness of lust, fitly called *Fugalia*, as the *chasers* away of all chastity and honesty): but where the people might come and hear their gods' doctrine concerning the restraint of covetousness, the suppression of ambition, and the bridling of luxury and riot: where wretches might learn that which Perseus thunders unto them, saying:

“Discitéque ô miseri, et causas cognoscite rerum,
Quid sumus, aut quidnam victuri gignimur: ordo
Quis datus, aut metæ quàm mollis flexus, et undes
Quis modus argenti, quid fas optare, quid asper
Utile nummus habet: patriæ charisque propinquis
Quantum elargiri decet, quem te Deus esse
Iussit, et humana qua parte locatus es in re.”

‘Learn wretches, and conceive the course of things,
What man is, and why nature forth him brings:
His settled bounds, from whence how soon he strays:
What wealths mean, and that for which the good man prays;
How to use money: how to give to friends,
What we in earth, and God in us, intends,’ &c.

Let them show where these lessons of their instructing gods were ever read or rehearsed: whether ever their worshippers were used to hear of any such matters, as we use to do continually in our churches, erected for this purpose in all places wheresoever the religion of Christ is diffused.

CHAPTER VII.

That the philosophers' instructions are weak and bootless, in that they bear no divine authority : because that the examples of the gods are greater confirmations of vices in men, than the wise men's disputations are on the contrary part.

Do you think they will mention their philosophy schools unto us? as for them, first of all they are derived from Greece, and not from Rome : or if you say they are now Roman because Greece is become a province of the Romans, I answer again that the instructions given there are not of the documents of your gods, but the inventions of man, whose quick wit's especial endeavour was to find by disputation what secrets were hid in the treasury of nature : what was to be desired, and what to be avoided in our morality, and what was coherent by the laws of disputation, or not following the induction, or quite repugnant unto it. And some of these gave light to great inventions, as the grace of God assisted them, but yet they evermore erred, as the frailty of man possessed them ; the divine providence justly opposing their vain-glory to show the tract of piety to rise from humbleness unto height, by their comparison : which we shall hereafter take an occasion to search into further by the will of the true and everlasting God. But if it were true that these philosophers invented any means sufficient to direct one to the attaining of a happy course of life, is there not far greater reason to give them divine honours, than the other? How much more honest were it for to hear Plato's books read in a temple of Isis, than the Galli gelded in the devils? To view the effeminate consecrated ; the lunatic gashed with cuts, and each thing else either cruel or bestial, or bestially cruel, or cruelly bestial, so commonly celebrated in the solemnities of such gods? Were it not far more worthy to have some good laws of the gods rehearsed unto the youth for their instruction in integrity, than to pass the time in vain commendations of the labours of illuded antiquity ; but indeed all the worshippers of such gods, as soon as they are initiate unto those luxurious and venomous adorations, as Perseus saith, do look more after Jupiter's deeds, than either Plato's doctrine or Cato's opinions. And hereupon it is that Terence brings in the lustful youth gazing upon a table picture, wherein was drawn how Jove sent down a shower of gold into the lap of Diana ; and this was a fit precedent for this youth to follow in his lust, with a boast that he did but imitate a god. But what god," saith he ; "even he that shakes the temples with his

thunder : since he did thus, shall I (a mean wretch to him) make bones of it? No; I did it with all mine heart."

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Romans' stage plays, wherein the publishing of their gods' foulest impurities, did not any way offend but rather delight them.

AYE, but (will some say) these things are not taught in the institutions of the gods, but in the inventions of the poets. I will not say that the gods' mysteries are more obscene than the theatre's presentations; but this I say (and will bring history sufficient to convince all those that shall deny it) that those plays which are formed according to these poetical fictions, were not exhibited by the Romans unto their gods in their solemnities through any ignorant devotion of their own, but only by reason that the gods themselves did so strictly command, yea, and even in some sort, extort from them the public presenting and dedication of those plays unto their honours. This I handled briefly in the first book. For, when the city was first of all infected with the pestilence, then were stages first ordained at Rome by the authorisation of the chief priest. And what is he, that in ordering of his courses, will not rather choose to follow the rudiments which are to be fetched out of plays, or whatsoever being instituted by his gods, rather than the weaker ordinances of mortal men? If the poets did falsely record Jupiter for an adulterer, then these gods being so chaste, should be the more offended, and punish the world, for thrusting such a deal of villainy into their ceremonies, and not for omitting them. Of these stage plays the best and most tolerable are tragedy and comedy: being poetical fables made to be acted at these shows: wherein notwithstanding was much dishonest matter, in actions, but none at all of words: and these the old men do cause to be taught to their children, amongst their most honest and liberal studies.

CHAPTER IX.

What the Romans' opinion was touching the restraint of the liberty of poesy, which the Greeks, by the counsel of their gods, would not have restrained at all.

WHAT the Romans held concerning this point, Cicero recordeth in his books which he wrote "Of the Commonwealth," where Scipio is brought

n saying thus : " If that the privilege of an old custom had not allowed them, comedies could never have given such proofs of their vileness upon theatres." And some of the ancient Greeks pretended a convenience in their vicious opinion, and made it a law that the comedian might speak what he would, of any man, by his name. Wherefore, as Africanus saith well in the same book, " Whom did not the poet touch, may whom did he not vex, whom spared he? perhaps, so saith one, he quipped a sort of wicked, seditious, vulgar fellows, as Cleo, Clytophon, and Hyperbolus; to that we assent," quoth he again, " though it were fitter for such faults to be taxed by the censor than by a poet, but it was no more decent that Pericles should be snuffed at, having so many years governed the city so well both in war and peace, than it were for our Plautus, or Næuius to deride Publius or Cneius Scipio, or for Cæcilius to mock Marcus Cato." And again, a little after, " Our twelve tables," quoth he, " having decreed the observation but of a very few things upon pain of death, yet thought it good to establish this for one of that few, that none should write or act any verse, derogatory from the good name of any man, or prejudicial unto manners. Excellently well! for our lives ought not to be the objects for poets to play upon, but for lawful magistracy, and thoroughly informed justice to judge upon, nor is it fit that men should hear themselves reproached, but in such places as they may answer and defend their own cause in." Thus much out of Cicero in his fourth book " Of the Commonwealth " (which I thought good to rehearse word for word, only I was forced to leave out somewhat, and somewhat to transpose, for the easier understanding. For it gives great light unto the proposition which I (if so be I can) must prove and make apparent). He proceedeth further in this discourse, and in the end concludeth thus, that the ancient Romans utterly disliked, that any man should be either praised or dispraised upon the stage. But as I said before, the Greeks in this, though they used less modesty, yet they followed more convenience, seeing they saw their gods so well to approve of the represented disgraces, not only of men, but even of themselves, when they came upon the stage : whether the plays were fictions of poetry, or true histories of their deeds (and I wish their worshippers had held them only worth the laughing at ; and not worth imitation !), for it were too much pride in a prince to seek to have his own fame preserved, when he sees his gods before him set theirs at six and seven. For whereas it is said in their defence, that these tales of their gods were not true, but merely poetical inventions, and false fictions, why this doth make it more abominable, if you respect the purity of your religion : and if you observe the malice of the devil, what more cunning or more deceitful fetch can there be? For when an honest and worthy ruler of a country is slandered, is not the slander so much more wicked and unpardonable,

as this party's life that is slandered is clearer and sounder from touch of any such matter? what punishment then can be sufficient for those that offer their gods such foul and impious injury?

CHAPTER X.

That the devils through their settled desire to do men mischief, were willing to have any villainies reported of them, whether true or false.

BUT those wicked spirits, whom these men take to be gods, were desirous to have such beastly stories spread abroad of them (though they themselves had never acted any such thing), only to keep men's minds inveigled in such bestial opinions, as it were in snares or nets, and by that means to draw them to predestinate damnation for company: whether it be true that such men as those that love to live in errors, do select for gods, did themselves commit any such things (for which the devils set themselves out to be adored, by a thousand several tricks of hurtful deceit): or that there were no such things done at all, but only those malicious and subtle devils do cause them to be feigned of the gods, to the end that there might be sufficient authority, derived as it were from heaven to earth, for men to commit all filthiness by. Therefore the Grecians, seeing that they had such gods as these to serve, thought it not fit to take away any liberty from the poets in using these stage-mocks and shames. And this they did either for fear lest their gods should be provoked to anger against them, in case they went about to make themselves into more honest moulds than they were, and so seem to prefer themselves before them; or else for desire to be made like their gods, even in their greatest enormities. And from this imagined convenience came it, that they hold the very actors of such plays, to be worthy of honours in their cities. For in the same book "Of the Commonwealth," Æschines of Athens, an eloquent man, having been an actor of tragedies in his youth, is said to have borne office in the Commonwealth. And Aristodemus, another actor of tragedies, was sent by the Athenians upon an embassy to Philip, about especial and weighty affairs of war and peace. For they held it an unmeet thing (seeing they saw their gods approve of those actions, and arts of playing) to repute those worthy of any note of infamy, that were but the actors of them.

CHAPTER XI.

That the Grecians admitted their players to bear office in their Commonwealths, lest they should seem unjust in despising such men as were the pacifiers of their gods.

THIS was the Grecians' practice: absurd enough, howsoever, but yet most fully applied unto the nature of the gods: they durst not exempt the wives of their citizens from the lashes of poetical pens and players' tongues, because they saw their gods delighted at the traducing of themselves: and they thought, surely, that those men that acted such things upon the stage as pleased the gods, ought not to be disliked at any hand by them that were but servants to those gods. Nay not only that, but that they ought to be absolutely and highly honoured by their fellow-citizens: for what reason could they find, for the honouring of the priests that offered the sacrifices which the gods accepted well of, and yet allow the actors to be disgracefully thought of, who had learnt their profession by the special appointment of the selfsame gods, that exact these celebrations of them, and are displeased if they be not solemnised? Especially seeing that Labeo (who they say was most exact in these matters) distinguisheth the good spirits from the bad by this diversity of their worships, that the bad ones are delighted with *laughters* and *tragical invocations*, and the good with *mirthful revels* and *sporting honours*, such as *plays* (quoth he), *banquets*, and *revelling in beds* are; of which hereafter (so God be pleased) we will discourse more at large. But to our present purpose: whether it be so that all kinds of honours be given unto all the gods mixed and confused, as unto only good ones (for it is not fit to say there are any evil gods, although indeed they are all evil, being all unclean spirits): or that according as Labeo saith, there must be a discretion used, and that these must have such and such particular rites of observances assigned, and those other, others; howsoever, the Greeks did most conveniently to hold both priests and players worthy of honourable dignities, the priests for offering of their sacrifices, and the players for acting of their interludes: lest otherwise, they should be guilty of offering injury either to all their gods, if they all love plays, or (which is worse) to those whom they account as the good ones, if they only affect them.

CHAPTER XII.

That the Romans in abridging that liberty (which the poets would have used upon men), and in allowing them to use it upon their gods, did herein show, that they prized themselves above their gods.

BUT the Romans (as Scipio glorieth in that book "Of the Commonwealth") would by no means have the good names and manners of their citizens liable to the quips and censures of the poets, but inflicted a capital punishment upon all such as durst offend in that kind : which indeed (in respect of themselves), was honestly and well instituted, but in respect of their gods most proudly and irreligiously, for though they knew that their gods were not only patient, but even well pleased at the representing of their reproaches and exorbitancies, yet would they hold themselves more unworthy to suffer such injuries than their gods, thrusting such things into their solemnities, as they avoided from themselves by all rigour of laws. Yea, Scipio, dost thou commend the restraint of this poetical liberty in taxing your persons, when thou seest it hath been ever free to calumniate your gods? Dost thou value the court alone so much more than the Capitol, than all Rome, nay, than all heaven that the poets must be curbed by an express law, from flouting at the citizens, and yet without all control of senator, censor, prince, or priest, have free leave to throw what slander they please upon the gods? What? Was it so unseemly that Plautus, or Nævius to traduce P. or Cneius Scipio ; or for Cæcilius to jest upon M. Cato? And was it seemly for your Terence to animate a youth to uncleanness by the example of the deed of high and mighty Jupiter?

CHAPTER XIII.

That the Romans might have observed their gods' unworthiness, by their desires of such obscene solemnities.

IT might be Scipio, were he alive again, would answer me thus : How can we possibly set any penalty upon such things as our gods themselves do make sacred, by their own express induction of those plays into our customs, and by annexing them to the celebration of their sacrifices and honours, wherein such things are ever to be acted and celebrated? But why then, say I again, do not you discern them by this impurity to be no true gods, nor worthy of any divine honours at all : for if it be altogether unmeet for you to honour such men as love to see and set forth plays that are stuffed with the reproach of the

Romans, how then can you judge them to be gods, how then can you hold them for unclean spirits, that through desire to deceive others, require it as part of their greatest honours to be cast in the teeth with their own filthinesses? Indeed the Romans, though they were locked in those chains of hurtful superstition, and served such gods as they saw required such dishonest spectacles at their hands, yet had they such a care of their own honesty and dignity, that they would never vouchsafe the actors of such vile things, any honour in their commonwealth, as the Greeks did: but according to Scipio's words in Cicero: "Seeing that they held the art of stage-playing as base and unmanly, therefore they did not only detain all the honours of the city from such kind of men, but appointed the censors in their views, to remove them from being part of any tribe, and would not vouchsafe them to be counted as members of the city." A worthy decree, and well beseeming the Roman wisdom; yet this wisdom would I have to imitate and follow itself: mightily hath the council of the city in this well desiring and deserving commendations (showing itself to be in this truly Roman), appointed that whosoever will choose of a citizen of Rome to become a player, he should not only live secluded from all honours, but by the censor's censure should be made utterly incapable of living as a member of his proper tribe. But now tell me but this, why the players should be branded with inability to bear honours, and yet the plays they act, inserted into the celebration of the gods' honours? The Roman valour flourished a long time, unacquainted with these theatre tricks: suppose then that men's vain affections gave them their first induction, and that they crept in by the errors of man's decayed members, doth it hence follow that the gods must take delight in them, or desire them? If so, why then is the player debased, by whom the god is pleased? and with what face can you scandalise the actors and instruments of such stage guilt, and yet adore the exacters and commanders of these actions? This now is the controversy between the Greeks and the Romans. The Greeks think that they have good reason to honour these players, seeing that they must honour them that require these plays: the Romans, on the other side, are so far from gracing them, that they will not allow them a place in a plebeian tribe, much less in the Court or Senate, but hold them disgraceful to all callings. Now in this disputation, this only argument gives the upshot of all the controversy. The Greeks propound: If such gods be to be worshipped, then such actors are also to be held as honourable. The Romans assume: But such actors are no way to be held as honourable. The Christians conclude: Therefore such gods are no way to be worshipped.

CHAPTER XIV.

That Plato, who would not allow poets to dwell in a well governed city, showed that his sole worth was better than those gods, that desire to be honoured with stage-plays.

AGAIN, we ask another question: Why the poets that make those comedies (and being prohibited by a law of the twelve tables to defame the citizens, yet do dishonour the gods with such foul imputations) are not reputed as dishonest and disgraceful as the players? what reason can be produced, why the actors of such poetical figments, being so ignominious to the gods, should be deputed infamous, and yet the authors be vouchsafed honours? Is not Plato more praiseworthy than you all, who disputing of the true perfection of a city would have poets banished from that society, as enemies to the city's full perfection? he had both a grief to see his gods so injured, and a care to keep out these fictions whereby the citizens' minds might be abused: now make but a comparison of his humanity in expelling of poets from his city, lest they should delude it with the gods' divinity that desired such plays and revels in their honours; by which the city might be deluded: he, though he did not induce or persuade them to it, yet advised and counselled the light and luxurious Greeks in his disputation, to restrain the writing of such things: but these gods, by command, and constraint, even forced the modest and staid Romans to present them with such things: nay not only to present them, but even to dedicate and consecrate them in all solemnity unto their honours. Now to which of these may the city with most honesty ascribe divine worship? whether to Plato that would forbid these filthy obscenities, or to these devils that exult in deluding of those men whom Plato could not persuade to truth? This man did Labeo think meet to be reckoned amongst the demi-gods, as he did Hercules also, and Romulus: and he prefers the demi-gods before the heroes, but notwithstanding makes deities of them both: but howsoever, I hold this man whom he calls a demi-god, worthy to be preferred not only before the heroes, but even before all their other gods themselves; and in this the Roman laws do come somewhat near his disputations: for whereas he condemns all allowance of poets, they deprive them of their liberty to rail at any man. He excludeth poets from dwelling in his city: they deprive the actors of poetical fables from the privileges of citizens: and it may be (if they durst do aught against gods that require such stage games) they would thrust them forth for altogether. Wherefore the Romans can neither receive nor expect any moral instructions, either for correcting of faults or increasing virtues, from those gods, whom their own laws already do

subvert and convince. The gods require plays for increase of their honours: the Romans exclude players from partaking of theirs; the gods require their own faults to be celebrated by poets' inventions; the Romans restrain the poet's looseness from touching any of the Romans' imperfections. But Plato, that demi-god, he both resists this impure affection of the gods, and shows what ought to be perfected by the cowardliness of the Romans; denying poets all place in a well-ordered commonwealth howsoever, whether they presented the figments of their own lusts and fancies, or related aught else as the guilt of the gods, and therefore of imitable examples: but we Christians make Plato neither whole god nor demi-god; nor do we vouchsafe to compare him with any of God's angels, or His prophets, not with any of Christ's Apostles or His martyrs, no not with any Christian man, and why we will not, by God's help, in the due place we will declare. But notwithstanding, seeing they will needs have him a demi-god, we think him worthy to be preferred (if not before Romulus or Hercules, though there was never historian nor poet affirmed, or feigned, that he ever killed his brother, or committed any other mischievous act, yet at least) before Priapus or any Cynocephalus, or lastly any Febris, all which the Romans either had as gods from strangers, or set them up as their own in peculiar. How then could such gods as these by any counsel they could give, prevent or cure such great corruption of minds and manner (whether imminent, or already infused) seeing they regarded nothing else but to diffuse and augment this contagion of wickedness, and to have it instilled into the people's notices from the stage, as their own acts, or acts which they approve, to the end, that man's lust might run the course of wickedness freely, after the gods' examples? Tully exclaimeth all in vain upon it who being to speak of poets, when he came to them, saith: "The clamour and approbation of the people, when it is joined with these poetical fictions, as the testimony of some great and learned master, oh what darkness doth it involve a man in? what fears it inflicts, what lusts it inflames?"

CHAPTER XV.

That flattery and not reason created some of the Roman gods.

BUT what other reason in the world (besides flattery) have they to make choice of these so false and feigned gods? Not vouchsafing Plato any little temple, whom notwithstanding they will have to be a demi-god (and one who took such pains in dissuading the corruption of manners through the depravation of opinions), and yet preferring Romulus before diverse of the gods, whom their most secret and exact

doctrine doth but make a semi-god, and not an entire deity; yet for him they appointed a Flamine, a kind of priesthood so far above the rest as their crests did testify that they had only three of those Flamines for three of their chiefest deities, the Dial or Jovial for Jupiters; the Martial, for Mars; and the Quirinal, for Romulus: for the love of his citizens having (as it were) hoisted him up into heaven, he was then called Quirinus, and kept that name ever after: and so by this you see Romulus here is preferred before Neptune and Pluto, Jupiter's brother, nay even before Saturn, father of them all: so that to make him great, they give him the same priesthood that Jupiter was honoured by, and likewise they give one to Mars, his pretended father, it may be rather for his sake than any other devotion.

CHAPTER XVI.

That if the Roman gods had had any care of justice, the city should have had their forms of good government from them, rather than to go and borrow it of other nations.

IF the Romans could have received any good instructions of morality from their gods, they would never have been beholding to the Athenians for Solon's laws, as they were, some years after Rome was built: which laws notwithstanding, they did not observe as they received them, but endeavoured to better them and make them more exact; and though Lycurgus feigned that he gave the Lacedemonians their laws by the authorisation of Apollo, yet the Romans very wisely would not give credence to him, and therefore gave no admission to these laws. Indeed Numa Pompilius, Romulus' successor, is said to have given them some laws: but all too insufficient for the government of a city. He taught them many points of their religion, but it is not reported that he had these institutions from the gods: those corruptions therefore of mind, conversation, and conditions, which were so great, that the most learned men durst affirm that these were the cankers by which all commonweals perished, though their walls stood never so firm; those did these gods never endeavour to withhold from them that worshipped them, but as we have proved before, did rather strive to enlarge and augment them, with all their care and fullest diligence.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the rape of the Sabine women, and diverse other wicked acts, done in Rome's most ancient and honourable times.

PERHAPS the gods would not give the Romans any laws, because as Sallust saith: "Justice and honesty prevailed as much with them by nature as by law." Very good: out of this justice and honesty came it, I think, that the Sabine virgins were ravished. What more just or more honest part can be played than to force away other men's daughters with all violence possible, rather than to receive them at the hand of their parents? But if it were unjustly done of the Sabines to deny the Romans their daughters, was it not far more unjustly done of them to force them away after that denial? There was more equity shown in making war upon those that would not give their daughters to beget alliance with their neighbours and countrymen, than with those that did but require back their own, which were injuriously forced from them. Therefore Mars should rather have helped his warlike son in revenging the injury of this rejected proffer of marriage, that so he might have won the virgin that he desired by force of arms. For there might have been some pretence of warlike law, for the conqueror justly to bear away those whom the conquered had unjustly denied him before. But he, against all law of peace, violently forced them from such as denied him them, and then began an unjust war with their parents, to whom he had given so just a cause of anger. Herein, indeed, he had good and happy success. And albeit the Circensian plays were continued to preserve the memory of this fraudulent act, yet neither the city nor the empire did approve such a precedent: and the Romans were more willing to err in making Romulus a deity after this deed of iniquity, than to allow by any law or practice, this fact of his in forcing of women thus, to stand as an example for others to follow. Out of this justice and honesty likewise proceeded this, that after Tarquin and his children were expelled Rome (because his son Sextus had ravished Lucretia) Junius Brutus being consul, compelled L. Tarquinius Collatine, husband to that Lucretia, his fellow officer, a good man, and wholly guiltless, to give over his place, and abandon the city, which vile deed of his, was done by the approbation (or at least omission) of the people, who made Collatine consul, as well as Brutus himself. Out of this justice and honesty came this also, that Marcus Camillus, that most illustrious worthy of his time, that with such ease subdued the warlike Veientes, the greatest foes of the Romans, and took their chief city from them: after that they had held the Romans in ten years' war, and spoiled their armies so often, that Rome herself began to tremble, and suspected her own safety: that this man by the malice of his back-

biting enemies, and the insupportable pride of the Tribunes, being accused of guilt, and perceiving the city (which he had preferred) so ungrateful, that he needs must be condemned, was glad to betake himself to willing banishment: and yet in his absence was fined at ten thousand *Asses*, being soon after to be called home again to free his thankless country the second time from the Gauls. It irks me to recapitulate the multitude of foul enormities which that city hath given act unto: the great ones seeking to bring the people under their subjection: the people again on the other side scorning to be subject to them: and the ringleaders on both sides aiming wholly rather at superiority and conquest, than ever giving room to a thought of justice or honesty.

CHAPTER XVIII.

What the history of Sallust reports of the Romans' conditions, both in their times of danger and those of security.

THEREFORE I will keep a mean, and stand rather unto the testimony of Sallust himself, who spoke this in the Romans' praise (whereof we but now discoursed), that justice and honesty prevailed as much with them by nature, as by law: extolling those times wherein the city (after the casting out of her kings) grew up to such a height in so small a space. Notwithstanding all this, this same author confesses in the very beginning of the first book of his history, that when the sway of the State was taken from the kings and given to the consuls, within a very little while after, the city grew to be greatly troubled with the oppressing power of the great ones; and the division of the people from the fathers upon that cause, and diverse other dangerous dissensions; for having recorded how honestly, and in what good concord the Romans lived together betwixt the second war of Africa, and the last; and having shown that it was not the love of goodness, but the fear and distrust of the Carthaginians' might, and perfidiousness, that was cause of this good order, and therefore that upon this Nasica would have Carthage stand still undemolished, as a fit means to debar the entrance of iniquity into Rome, and to keep in integrity by fear; he adds presently upon this, these words, "But discord, avarice, ambition, and all such mischiefs as prosperity is midwife unto, grew unto their full light after the destruction of Carthage," intimating herein, that they were sown, and continued amongst the Romans before: which he proves in his following reason. "For as for the violent offensiveness of the greater persons," saith he, "and the division betwixt the patricians and the plebeians thence arising, those were mischiefs amongst us from the beginning: nor was there any longer respect of equity or moderation amongst us, than whilst the kings

were in expelling and the city and State quit of Tarquin; and the great war of Etruria." Thus you see, how that even in that little space wherein after the expulsion of their kings they embraced integrity, it was only fear that forced them to do so, because they stood in dread of the wars, which Tarquin, upon his expulsion being combined with the Etrurians, waged against them. Now observe what Sallust adds, "for after that," quoth he, "the senators began to make slaves of the people, to judge of heads and shoulders, as bloodily and imperiously as the kings did to chase men from their possessions: and only they, of the whole crew of factions, bare the imperial sway of all, with which outrages (and chiefly with their extreme taxes and extortions) the people being sore oppressed, maintaining both soldiers in continual arms, and paying tribute also besides, at length they stept out, took up arms, and drew to a head upon Mount Aventine and Mount Sacer. And then they elected them tribunes, and set down other laws; but the second war of Africa gave end to these contentions on both sides." Thus you see in how little a while, so soon after the expelling of their kings, the Romans were become such as he has described them: of whom (notwithstanding) he had affirmed, that "justice and honesty prevailed as much with them by nature as by law." Now if those times were found to have been so depraved, wherein the Roman estate is reported to have been most uncorrupt and absolute, what shall we imagine may then be spoken or thought of the succeeding ages, which by a gradual alteration (to use the author's own words) of an honest and honourable city, became most dishonest and dishonourable, namely after the dissolution of Carthage, as he himself relates? How he discourses and describes these times, you may at full behold in his history, and what progress this corruption of manners made through the midst of the city's prosperity, even until the time of the civil wars. But from that time forward, as he reports, the manners of the better sort did no more fall to decay by little and little, but ran headlong to ruin, like a swift torrent, such excess of luxury and avarice entering upon the manners of the youth, that it was fitly said of Rome, that she brought forth such as would neither keep goods themselves nor suffer others to keep theirs. Then Sallust proceeds, in a discourse of Sylla's villainies, and of other barbarous blemishes in the commonwealth: and to his relation in this do all other writers agree in substance, though they be all far behind him in phrase. But here you see (and so I hope do all men) that whosoever will observe but this, shall easily discover the large gulf of damnable viciousness into which this city was fallen, long before the coming of our heavenly King. For these things came to pass, not only before that ever Christ our Saviour taught in the flesh, but even before He was born of the Virgin, or took flesh at all: seeing therefore that they dare not impute unto their own gods those

so many and so great mischiefs, either the tolerable ones which they suffered before, or the fouler ones which they incurred after the destruction of Carthage (howsoever their gods are the engrafters of such malign opinions in men's minds, as must needs bud forth such vices), why then do they blame Christ for the evils present, who forbids them to adore such false and devilish gods, by His sweet and saving doctrine, which do condemn all these harmful and ungodly affections of man by His divine authority, and from all those miseries, withdraws His flock and family by little and little out of all places of the declining world, to make of their company an eternal and celestial city, not by the applause of vanity, but by the election of verity.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the corruptions ruling in the Roman State, before that Christ abolished the worship of their idols.

BEHOLD now this commonwealth of Rome, which I am not the first that affirm, but their own writers, out of whom I speak, do aver, to have declined from good by degrees, and of an honest and honourable state, to have fallen into the greatest dishonesty and dishonour possible. Behold, before ever Christ was come, how that Carthage being once out of the way, then the patrician's manners decayed no more by degrees, but ran headlong into corruption like a swift torrent, the youth of the city was still so defiled with luxury and avarice.

Now let them read us the good counsel that their gods gave them against this luxury and avarice: I wish they had only been silent in the instructions of modesty and chastity, and had not exacted such abominations of their worshippers, unto which by their false divinity they gave such pernicious authority. But let them read our laws, and they shall hear them, thundering out of divine oracles and God's clouds (as it were) against avarice and luxury, by the mouths of the prophets, by the Gospel, the Apostles, their acts and their epistles, so divinely, and so excellently, all the people flocking together to hear them; not as to a vain and jangling philosophical disputation, but as to an admonition from heaven. And yet these wretches will not blame their gods, for letting their weal-public be so foully bespotted with enormous impieties, before the coming of Christ: but whatsoever misery or affliction their effeminate and unmanly pride hath tasted of since this coming, that the Christian religion is sure to have in their teeth withal. The good rules and precepts whereof, concerning honesty and integrity of manners, if all the kings of the earth, and all people, princes and all the judges of the earth, young men and virgins, old men, children, all ages and sexes

capable of reason, and even the very soldiers, and tax-takers themselves (to whom John Baptist speaks) would hear and regard well; their commonwealths would not only adorn this earth below with present honesty, but would ascend up to heaven, there to sit on the highest point of eternal glory. But because this man doth but hear, and that man doth not regard, and the third doth despise it, and far more do love the stroking hand of viciousness, than the rougher touch of virtue, Christ's children are commanded to endure with patience the calamities that fall upon them by the ministers of a wicked commonwealth: be they kings, princes, judges, soldiers and governors, rich or poor, bound or free, of what sex or sort soever, they must bear all with patience: being by their sufferance here, to attain a most glorious place in that royal and imperial city of angels above, and in that heavenly commonwealth, where the will of Almighty God is their only law, and His law their will.

CHAPTER XX.

Of what kind of happiness, and of what conditions the accusers of Christianity desire to partake.

BUT such worshippers, and such lovers of those vicious gods, whom they rejoice to follow and imitate in all villainies and mischiefs, those do never respect the goodness, or the integrity of the commonwealth. No, say they, let it but stand, let it but be rich and victorious; or (which is best of all) let it but enjoy security and peace, and what care we? Yes marry, it doth belong to our care, that every one might have means to increase his wealth, to nourish the expense of his continual riot, and wherewithal the greater might still keep under the meaner. Let the poor obey the rich, for their bellies' sakes; and that they may live at ease under their protections: let the rich abuse the poor in their huge attendances, and ministering to their sumptuousness. Let the people applaud such as afford them delights, not such as proffer them good counsels. Let nought that is hard be enjoined, nought that is impure be prohibited. Let not the king's care be how good, but how subject his people be. Let not subdued provinces serve their kings as reformers of their manners, but as the lords of their estates, and the procurers of their pleasures: not honouring them sincerely, but fearing them servilely. Let the laws look to him that looks after another man's possessions, rather than him that looks not after his own life. Let no man be brought before the judges, but such as has offered violence unto others' estates, houses, or persons. But for a man's own, let it be free for him to use it as he list, and so of other men's, if they consent.

Let there be good store of common harlots, either for all that please to use them, or for those that cannot keep private ones. Let stately and sumptuous houses be erected, banquets and feasts solemnised, let a man drink, eat, game and revel day and night, where he may or will: let dancing be ordinary in all places: let luxurious and bloody delights fill the theatre, with dishonest words, and shows, freely and uncontrolled. And let him be held an enemy to the public good, that is an opposite unto this felicity. Let the people turn away their ears from all such as shall assay to dissuade or alter them, let them banish them, let them kill them. Let them be eternized for gods, that shall procure the people this happiness, and preserve what they have procured. Let them have what glory or worship they will, what plays they will or can exact of their worshippers: only let them work so that this felicity stand secure from enemy, pestilence, and all other inconveniences. Now tell me, what reasonable creature would liken such a State (not unto Rome, but even) to the house of Sardanapalus? which whilom king, was so far given over to his pleasures, that he caused it to be written upon his grave, that he only as then possessed that, which his luxury in his lifetime had wasted: now if those fellows had but a king like this, that would nouse them in these impurities, and never control nor correct them in any such courses, they would be readier to erect a temple to him, and give him a Flamine, than ever were the old Romans to do so unto Romulus.

CHAPTER XXI.

Tully's opinion of the Roman commonwealth.

BUT if he be scorned that said their commonwealth was most dishonest and dishonourable, and that these fellows regard not what contagion and corruption of manners do rage amongst them, so that their State may stand and continue, now shall they hear that it is not true that Sallust saith, that their commonwealth is but become vile and so wicked, but as Cicero saith, it is absolutely gone, it is lost, and nothing of it remains. For he brings in Scipio (him that destroyed Carthage) disputing of the weal-public, at such time as it was presaged that it would perish by that corruption which Sallust describes. For this disputation was at that time when one of the Gracchi was slain, from which point Sallust affirms all the great seditions to have had their original (for in those books there is mention made of his death). Now Scipio having said (in the end of the second book) that as in instruments that go with strings, or wind, or as in voices consorted, there is one certain proportion of discrepant

notes, unto one harmony, the least alteration whereof is harsh in the ear of the skilful hearer: and that this concord does consist of a number of contrary sounds, and yet all combined into one perfect musical melody: so in a city that is governed by reason, of all the highest, mean and lowest estates, as of sounds, there is one true concord made out of discordant natures: and that which is harmony in music, is unity in a city: that this is the firmest, and surest bond of safety unto the commonweal, and that a commonweal can never stand without equity: when he had dilated at large of the benefit that equity brings to any government, and of the inconvenience following the absence hereof: then Pilus, one of the company, begins to speak, and intreated him to handle this question more fully, and make a larger discourse of justice, because it was then become a common report that a commonwealth could not be governed without injustice and injury: hereupon Scipio agreed, that this theme was to be handled more exactly, and replied: that what was as yet spoken of the commonwealth was nothing; and that they could not proceed any farther, until it were proved not only that it is false, that a weal-public cannot stand without injury, but also that it is true that it cannot stand without exact justice. So the disputation concerning this point being deferred until the next day following, in the third book, it is handled with great controversy. For Pilus, he undertakes the defence of their opinion, that hold that a state cannot be governed without injustice, but with this provision, that they should not think him to be of that opinion himself. And he argued very diligently for this injustice against justice, endeavouring by likely reasons and examples, to show that the part he defended was useful in the weal-public, and that the contrary was altogether needless. Then Lælius being entreated on all sides, stepped up, and took the defence of justice in hand, and with all his knowledge, laboured to prove that nothing wrecked a city sooner than injustice, and that no State could stand without perfect justice; which when he had concluded, and the question seemed to be thoroughly discussed, Scipio betook himself again to his intermitted discourse, and first he rehearses and approves his definition of a commonwealth, wherein he said it was "the estate of the commonty," then he determines this, that this "commonty" is not meant of every rabblement of the multitude, but that it is a "society gathered together in one consent of law, and in one participation of profit." Then he teaches the profit of definitions in all disputations: and out of his definitions he gathers, that only there is a commonwealth, that is, only there is a good estate of the commonty, where justice and honesty have free execution, whether it be by a king, by nobles, or by the whole people. But when the king becomes unjust (whom he calls "tyranner" as the Greeks do), or the nobles be unjust (whose combination he terms "faction"), or the people themselves be unjust (for which he

cannot find a fit name, unless he should call the whole company as he called the king, a "tyran") then that this is not a vicious commonwealth (as was affirmed the day before), but, as the reasons depending upon those definitions proved most directly, it is just no commonwealth at all, for it is no estate of the people, when the "tyran" usurps on it by "faction," nor is the commonty a commonty, when it is not a society gathered together in one consent of law and one participation of commodities, as he had defined a commonty before. Wherefore, seeing the Roman estate was such as Sallust does decipher it to be, it was now no dishonest or dishonourable commonwealth (as he affirmed), but it was directly no commonwealth at all: according unto the reasons proposed in that discourse of a commonwealth before so many great princes and heads thereof: and as Tully himself, not speaking by Scipio or any other, but in his own person, doth demonstrate in the beginning of his first book: where having first rehearsed that verse of Ennius where he saith—

"Moribus antiquis res stat Romana virisque,"

'Old manners and old men upholden Rome.'

"Which verse," quoth Tully, "whether you respect the brevity, or the verity, me seemeth he spoke out as an oracle: for neither the men (unless the city had had such manners, nor the manners, unless the city, had had such men) could either have founded, or preserved a commonwealth of that magnitude of justice, and empire. And therefore before these our days, the predecessors' conditions, did still make the successors excel, and the worthy men still kept up the ordinances of honourable antiquity: but now, our age receiving the commonwealth as an excellent picture, but almost worn out with age, has not only no care to renew it with such colours as it presented at first, but never regarded it so much, as to preserve but the bare draught and lineament of it: for what remainder is there now of those old manners which this poet says supported Rome! do we not see them so clearly worn out of use, and now so far from being followed, that they are quite forgotten? what need I speak of these men? The manners perished for want of men, the cause whereof in justice, we should not only be bound to give an account of, but even to answer it, as a capital offence: it is not any misfortune, it is not any chance, but it is our own viciousness that has taken away the whole essence of our commonwealth from us, and left us only the bare name."

This was Cicero's own confession, long after Africanus' death, whom he induces as a disputant in this work of his "Of the Commonwealth," but yet somewhat before the coming of Christ. Which mischiefs had they not been divulged until the increase of Christian religion, which of all those wretches would not have been ready to calumniate Christ for

them? But why did their gods look to this no better, nor help to save the state of this weal-public, whose loss and ruin Cicero bewails with such pitiful phrase, long before Christ came in the flesh? Nay, let the commendators thereof observe but in what case it was even then when it consisted of the ancient men and their manners, whether then it flourished true justice or no; and whether at that time it were honest indeed, or but glossed over in show! which Cicero not conceiving what he said, confesses, in his relation thereof. But, by God's grace, we will consider that more fully elsewhere: for in the due place, I will do what I can to make a plain demonstration out of Cicero's own definitions of the commonwealth and the people (spoken by Scipio and justified by many reasons, either of Scipio's own, or such as Tully gives him in this discourse) that the estate of Rome was never any true commonwealth, because it never was guided by true justice: indeed according to some other probable definitions, and after a sort, it was a kind of commonwealth: but far better governed by the antiquity of the Romans, than by their posterity. But there is not any true justice in any commonwealth whatsoever, but in that whereof Christ is the founder, and the ruler, if you please to call that a common-weal which we cannot deny is the weal of the commonty. But if this name being elsewhere so common, seem too discrepant for our subject and phrase, truly then there is true justice, but in that city whereof that holy scripture saith, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God."¹

CHAPTER XXII.

That the Roman gods never respected whether the city were corrupted, and so brought to destruction, or no.

BUT to our present purpose: this commonwealth which they say was so good and so laudable, before ever that Christ came, was by the judgment of their own most learned writers, acknowledged to be changed into a most dishonest and dishonourable one: nay it was become no commonwealth at all, but was fallen into absolute destruction by their own polluted conditions. Wherefore to have prevented this ruin, the gods that were the patrons thereof, should (methinks) have taken the pains to have given the people that honoured them, some receipts for reformation of life and manners, seeing that they had bestowed so many temples, so many priests, such variety of ceremonious sacrifices, so many festival solemnities; so many and so great celebrations of plays and interludes upon them. But these devils minded

¹ Ps. lxxxvii. 3.

nothing but their own affairs : they respected not how their worshippers lived : nay their care was to see them live like devils, only they bound them through fear to afford them these honours. If they did give them any good counsel, why then let it be produced to light and read, what laws, of what god's giving were they, that the Gracchi condemned, to follow their turmoils and seditions in the city : show which precept of the gods, Marius or Cinna, or Carbo violated, in their giving action unto the civil wars : which they began upon such unjust causes, followed with such cruelties and injuries, and ended in more injurious cruelties : or what divine authorities Sylla himself broke, whose life, deeds, and conditions, to hear Sallust describe (and other true historians), whose hair would not stand upright? What is he now that will not confess that then the weal-public fell absolutely? What is he now that will dare to produce that sentence of Virgil for this corruption of manners, in the defence of their gods?

“ Discéssere omnes adytis arisque relictis,
Dü, quibus imperium hoc steterat.”—*Aen.* 2.

‘ The gods by whom this empire stood, left all
The temples and the altars bare.’

But admit that this were true : then have they no reason to rail upon Christianity, or to say that the gods being offended at that, did forsake them : because it was their predecessors' manners, that long ago chased all their great multitude of little gods from the city altars, like so many flies. But where was all this nest of deities, when the Gauls sacked the city, long before the ancient manners were contaminate? were they present and yet fast asleep? the whole city was all subdued at that time, only the Capitol remained : and that had been surprised too, if the geese had not shown themselves better than the gods, and waked when they were all asleep. And hereupon did Rome fall almost into the superstition of the Egyptians that worship birds and beasts, for they henceforth kept a holy day, which they called the goose's feast. But this is but by the way : I come not yet to dispute of those accidental evils, which are rather corporal than mental and inflicted by foes, or misfortunes. I am now in discourse of the stains of the mind, and manners, and how they first decayed by degrees, and afterwards fell headlong into perdition : so that thence ensued so great a destruction to the weal-public (though their city walls stood still unbattered) that their chiefest authors doubted not to proclaim it lost and gone. Good reason was it that the gods should abandon their temples and altars, and leave the town to just destruction, if it had condemned their advices of reformation. But what might one think (I pray ye) of those gods, that would abide with the people that worshipped them, and yet would they never teach them any means to leave their vices, and follow what was good?

CHAPTER XXIII.

That the variety of temporal estates depends not upon the pleasure or displeasure of these devils, but upon the judgments of God Almighty.

NAY what say you to this, that these their gods do seem to assist them in fulfilling their desires, and yet are not able to restrain them from brooding up such desires: for they that helped Marius, an unworthy base-born fellow, to run through the inducement and managing of such barbarous civil wars, to be made seven times Consul, to die an old man in his seventh Consulship, and to escape the hands of Sylla, that immediately after bore down all before him, why did not these gods keep Marius from affecting any such bloody deeds, or excessive cruelty? If his gods did not further him in these acts at all, then have we good advantage given us by their confession, that this temporal felicity which they so greatly thirst after, may befall a man without the gods' furtherance: and that other men may be as Marius was, engirt with health, power, riches, honours, friends, and long life, and enjoy all these, maugre the gods' beards: and again, that other men may be as Regulus was, tortured in chains, slavery, misery, over-watchings, and torments, and perish in these extremities, do all the gods what they can to the contrary: which if our adversaries do acknowledge, then must they needs confess that they do nothing benefit their worshippers' commodity, and consequently that all the honour given them as out of superfluity: for if they did rather teach the people the direct contraries to virtue and piety, the rewards whereof are to be expected after men's deaths, than anything that way furthering them: and if in these transitory and temporal benefits, they can neither hinder those they hate, nor further those they love: why then are they followed with such zeal and fervency? why do you mutter that they are departed, as from a course of turbulent and lamentable times, and hence take occasion to throw calumnious reproaches upon the religious Christians? If that your gods have any power to hurt or profit men in these worldly affairs, why did they stick to that accursed Marius, and shrink from that honest Regulus? does not this convince them of injustice and villainy? Do you think that there was any want of their worship on the wretch's party? think not so: for you never read that Regulus was slacker in the worship of the gods than Marius was. Nor may you persuade yourselves, that a corrupted course of life is the rather to be followed, because the gods were held more friendly to Marius than to Regulus; for Metellus, the most honest man of all the Romans, had five Consuls to his sons, and lived happy in all temporal estate: and Catiline, that villainous wretch, was oppressed with misery and brought to naught in the war which his

own guilt had hatched; good men that worship that God who alone can give felicity, do shine, and are mighty in the true and surest happiness; wherefore, when as the contaminate conditions of that weal-public, did subvert it, the gods never put to their helping hands to stop this inundation of corruption into their manners, but rather made it more way, and gave the Commonwealth a larger pass unto destruction. Nor let them shadow themselves under goodness, or pretend that the cities' wickedness drove them away. No, no, they were all there, they are produced, they are convicted, they could neither help the city by their instructions, nor conceal themselves by their silence. I omit to relate how Marius was commended unto the goddess Marica by the pitiful Minturnians in her wood, and how they made their prayers to her that she would prosper all his enterprises, and how he having shaken off his heavy desperation, returned with a bloody army even unto Rome itself: where what a barbarous, cruel, and more than most inhuman victory he obtained, let them that list to read it, look in those that have recorded it; this as I said I omit: nor do I impute his murderous felicity unto any Maricas, or I cannot tell whom, but unto the most secret judgment of the most mighty God to shut the mouths of our adversaries, and to free those from error that do observe this with a discreet judgment and not with a prejudicate effect. For if the devils have any power or can do anything at all in these affairs, it is no more than what they are permitted to do by the secret providence of the Almighty: and in this case, they may be allowed to effect somewhat to the end that we should neither take too much pleasure in this earthly felicity, in that we see that wicked men like Marius may enjoy it, neither hold it as an evil, and therefore to be utterly refused, seeing that many good honest men, and servants of the true and living God, have possessed it in spite of all the devils in hell: and that we should not be so fond as to think that these unclean spirits are either to be feared for any hurt, nor honoured for any profit they can bring upon man's fortunes. For they are in power, but even as wicked men upon earth are, so that they cannot do what they please, but are mere ministers to His ordinance, whose judgments no man can either comprehend fully, or reprehend justly.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the acts of Sylla, wherein the devils showed themselves his main helpers and furtherers.

Now as for Sylla himself, who brought all to such a pass, as that the times before (whereof he professed himself a reformer) in respect of those that be brought forth, were wished for again and again; when he

first of all set forward against Marius towards Rome, Livy writes that the entrails in the sacrifices were so fortunate, that Posthumius the soothsayer would need have himself to be kept under guard, with an urgent and willing proffer to lose his head, if all Sylla's intents sorted not (by the assistance of the gods) unto a most wished and happy effect. Behold now, the gods were not yet gone: they had not as yet forsaken their altars, when they did so plainly foreshow the event of Sylla's purposes: and yet they never endeavoured to mend Sylla's manners. They stuck not to promise him wished happiness; but never proffered to suppress his wicked affections. Again, when he had undertaken the Asian war against Mithridates, L. Titius was sent to him on a message, even from Jupiter himself, who sent him word that he should not fail to overcome Mithridates: no more he did indeed. And afterwards, when he endeavoured to re-enter the city, and to revenge himself and his injured friends, upon the lives of the citizens, he was certified that a certain soldier of the sixth legion, brought him another message from Jove, how that he had foretold him of his victory against Mithridates before, and how he promised him now the second time, that he would give him power to recover the rule of the weal-public from all his enemies, but not without much bloodshed. Then Sylla asking of what favour the soldier was: when they had shown him, he remembered that it was he that brought him the other message in the war of Mithridates, and that he was the same man that now brought him this. What can be said to this now, that the gods should have such care to acquaint Sylla with the good events of these his wishes: and yet none of them have power to reform his foul conditions, being then about to set abroad such mischief by these domestic arms, as should not pollute, but even utterly abolish the state of the weal-public? By this very act do they prove themselves (as I said heretofore) directly to be devils. And we do know, our scripture shows it us, and their own actions confirm it, that their whole care is to make themselves be reputed for gods, to be worshipped as divine powers, and to have such honours given them, as shall put the givers and the receivers both into one desperate case, at that great day of the Lord. Besides, when Sylla came to Tarentum, and had sacrificed there, he descried in the chief lap of the calf's liver, a figure just like a crown of gold: and then Posthumius, the soothsayer, answered him again, that it portended him a glorious victory, and commanded that he alone should eat of these entrails. And within a little while after, a servant of one Lucius Pontius came running in, crying out in prophetic manner, "I bring news from Bellona, the victory is thine, Sylla:" and then added, "that the Capitol should be fired." Which when he had said, presently going forth of the tents, he returned the next day in greater haste than before, and said that the Capitol was now burned: and burned it was indeed. This now might quickly be done

by the devil, both for ease in the knowledge of it, and speed in the relation. But now to speak to the purpose, mark but well what kind of gods these men would have, that blaspheme Christ, for delivering the hearts of the believers from the tyranny of the devil. The fellow cried out in his prophetic rapture, "The victory is thine, O Sylla," and to assure them that he spake by a divine instinct, he told them of a sudden event that should fall out soon after, in a place from whence he in whom this spirit spake, was a great way distant. But he never cried, "Forbear thy villainies, O Sylla : " those were left free to be executed by him with such horror, and committed with such outrage, as is unspeakable, after that victory which the bright sign of the crown in the calf's liver did prognosticate unto him. Now if they were good and just gods, and not wicked fiends, that had given such signs, then truly these entrails should have expressed the great mischiefs that should fall upon Sylla himself, rather than anything else : for that victory did not benefit his dignity so much, but it hurt his affections twice as much : for by it was his spirit elevated in vain-glory, and he induced to abuse his prosperity without all moderation, so that these things made a greater massacre of his manners than he made of the citizens' bodies. But as for these horrid and lamentable events, the gods would never foretell him of them, either by entrails, prophecies, dreams, or soothsayings : for their fear was lest his enormities should be reformed, not lest his fortunes should be subverted. No, their endeavour was, that this glorious conqueror of his citizens, might be captivated and conquered by the rankest shapes of viciousness, and by these, be more strictly bound and enchained unto the subjection of the devils themselves.

CHAPTER XXV.

How powerfully the devils incite men to villainies, by laying before them examples of divine authority (as it were) for them to follow in their villainous acts.

WHO is he then (unless he be one of those that loves to imitate such gods) that by this which is already laid open, does not see, how great a grace of God it is to be separated from the society of those devils? and how strong they are in working mischief, by presenting their own examples, as a divine privilege and authority, whereby men are licensed to work wickedness. Nay, they were seen in a certain large plain of Campania, to fight a set battle amongst themselves, a little before that the citizens fought that bloody conflict in the same place. For at first there were strange and terrible noises heard, and afterwards it was affirmed by many, that for certain days together, one might see two

armies in continual fight one against the other. And after that the fight was ceased, they found the ground all trampled with the steps of men, and horses, as if they had been made in that battle. If the deities were truly and really at war amongst themselves, why then indeed their example may give a sufficient privilege unto human conflicts (but by the way, let this be considered, that these deities in the mean space must either be very malicious, or very miserable): but if they did not fight, but only illuded the eyes of men with such a show, what intended they in this, but only that the Romans should think that they might lawfully wage civil wars, as having the practices of the gods themselves for their privileges? for presently upon this apparition, the civil dissensions began to be kindled, and some bloody massacres had been effected before. And already were the hearts of many grieved at that lamentable act of a certain soldier, who in taking of the spoils of his slain foe, and discovering him by his face to be his own brother, with a thunder of curses upon those domestic quarrels, he stabbed himself to the heart, and fell down dead by his brother's side. To envelop and overshadow the irksomeness of such events, and to aggravate the ardent thirst after more blood and destruction, did those devils (those false reputed gods) appear unto the Romans' eyes in such fighting figures, to animate the city not to be any whit in doubt to imitate such actions, as having the example of the gods for a lawful privilege for the villainies of men. And out of this subtilty did these malevolent powers give command for the induction of those stage plays, whereof we have spoken at large already, and wherein such dishonest courses of the gods were portrayed forth unto the world's eye, upon their stages, and in the theatres; that all men (both those that believe that their gods did such acts, and those that do not believe it, but see how pleasing it is to them to behold such impurities) may hence be bold to take a free licence to imitate them, and practise to become like them in their lives. Lest that any man therefore should imagine, that the poets have rather done it as a reproach to the gods, than as a thing by them deserved, when they have written of their fightings and brablings one with another, to clear this misconstruction, they themselves have confirmed these poesies to deceive others: and have presented their combats, and contentions, not only upon the stage by players, but even in the plain fields by themselves. This was I enforced to lay down; because their own authors have made no doubt to affirm and record, that the corrupt and rotten manners of the citizens, had consumed the state of the weal-public of Rome unto nothing, long before that Christ Jesus came into the world: for which subversion of their state they will not call their gods into any question at all, but all the transitory miseries of mortality (which notwithstanding cannot make a good man perish whether he live or die) they are ready to heap on the shoulders of our Saviour

Christ. Our Christ, that hath so often poured His all-curing precepts upon the incurable ulcers of their damned conditions, when their false gods never put to an helping hand, never upheld this their religious common-weal from ruining, but cankering the virtues that upheld it with their vile acts and examples, rather did all that they could to thrust it on unto destruction. No man (I think) will affirm that it perished because that—

“Discessere omnes adytis arisque relictis,—Dii.”

‘The gods were gone, and left their altars bare.’

As though their love to virtue, and their offence taken at the wicked vices of the city had made them depart: no, no, there are too many presages from entrails, soothsayings, and prophecies (whereby they confirmed and animated their servants, and extolled themselves as rulers of the fates, and furtherers of the wars), that prove and convince them to have been present: for had they been absent, the Romans in these wars would never have been so far transported with their own affections, as they were with their gods’ instigations.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of certain obscure instructions concerning good manners which the devils are said to have given in secret, whereas all wickedness was taught in their public solemnities.

WHEREFORE seeing that this is so, seeing that all filthiness confounded with cruelties, all the gods’ foulest acts and shames, whether true or imaginary, by their own commandments, and upon pain of their displeasures, if it were otherwise, were set forth to open view, and dedicated unto themselves, in the most holy and set solemnities, and produced as imitable spectacles to all men’s eyes: to what end is it then, that seeing these devils, who acknowledge their own uncleanness, by taking pleasure in such obscenities, by being delighted with their own villainies and wickednesses, as well performed as invented; and by their exacting these celebrations of modest men in such impudent manner, do confess themselves the authors of all pernicious and abhorred courses; yet would seem (forsooth) and are reported to have given certain secret instructions against evil manners, in their most private habitations, and unto some of their most selected servants? If it be so, take here then an excellent observation of the craft and maliciousness of these unclean spirits. The force of honesty and chastity is so great and powerful upon man’s nature, that all men, or almost all men, are moved with the

excellency of it, nor is there any man so wholly abandoned to turpitude, but he hath some feeling of honesty left him. Now for the devils' depraved nature, we must note, that unless he sometime change himself into an angel of light¹ (as we read in our scriptures that he will do), he cannot fully effect his intention of deceit. Wherefore he spreads the blasting breath of all impurity abroad, and in the meantime whispers a little air of dissembled chastity within. He gives light unto the vilest things, and keeps the best in the dark; honesty lieth hid, and shame flies about the streets. Filthiness must not be acted but before a great multitude of spectators: but when goodness is to be taught, the auditory is little or none at all: as though purity were to be blushed at, and uncleanness to be boasted of. But where are these rules given but in the devils' temples? where, but in the very inns, or exchanges of deceit? And the reason is, because that such as are honest (being but few) should hereby be inveigled, and such as are dishonest (which are multitudes) remain unreformed. But as for us, we cannot yet tell when these good precepts of celestial chastity were given; but this we are sure of, that before the very temple gates, where the idol stood, we beheld an innumerable multitude of people drawn together, and there saw a large train of strumpets on one side, and a virgin goddess on the other; here humble adorations unto her; and there, foul and immodest things acted before her. We could not see one modest mimic, not one shame-faced actor amongst them all: but all were full of actions of abominable obscenity. They knew well what that virgin deity liked, and pronounced it for the nations to learn by looking on, and to carry home in their minds. Some there were of the chaster sort, that turned away their eyes from beholding the filthy gestures of the players, and yet though they blushed to look upon this artificial beastliness, they gave scope unto their affections to learn it. For they durst not behold the impudent gestures of the actors boldly, for being shamed by the men; and less durst they condemn the ceremonies of that deity whom they so zealously adored. But this was that presented in the temples, and in public, which none will commit in their own private houses but in secret. It were too great a wonder if there were any shame left in those men of power to restrain them from acting that which their very gods do teach them, even in their principles of religion; and tell them that they shall incur their displeasures if they do not present them such shows. What spirit can that be, which doth inflame bad minds with a worse instinct, which doth urge on the committing of adultery, and sates itself upon the sin committed, but such an one as is delighted with such representations, filling the temples with diabolical images, exacting the presenting of loathsome iniquity in plays, muttering in secret, I know not what good

¹ 2 Cor. xi.

counsels, to deceive and delude the poor remainders of honesty, and professing in public all incitements to perdition, to gather up whole harvests of men given over unto ruin?

CHAPTER XXVII.

What a great means of the subversion of the Roman estate, the induction of those scurrilous plays was, which they surmised to be propitiatory unto their gods.

TERTULLIUS, a grave man, and a good philosopher, being to be made Edile, cried out in the ears of the whole city, that amongst the other duties of his magistracy, he must needs go pacify mother Flora with the celebration of some solemn plays: which plays, the more foully they were presented, the more devotion was held to be shown. And in another place (being then Consul), he said that when the city was in great extremity of ruin, they were fain to present plays continually for ten days together; and nothing was omitted which might help to pacify the gods, as though it were not fitter to anger them with temperance, than to please them with luxury; and to procure their hate by honesty, rather than to flatter them with such deformity. For the barbarous inhumanity of those men, for whose villainous acts the gods were to be appeased were it never so great, could not possibly do more hurt than that filthiness which was acted as tending to their appeasing, because that in this the gods will not be reconciled unto them, but by such means as must needs produce a destruction of the goodness of men's minds, in lieu of their preventing the dangers imminent only over their bodies: nor will these deities defend the city's walls, until they have first destroyed all goodness within the walls. This pacification of the gods, so obscene, so impure, so wicked, so impudent, so unclean, whose actors the Romans disenabled from all magistracy, and freedom of city, making them as infamous as they knew them dishonest: this pacification (I say), so beastly, and so directly opposite unto all truth of religion and modesty, these fabulous inventions of their gods' filthiness, these ignominious acts of the gods themselves (either foully stained, or more foully effected) the whole city learned both by seeing and hearing: observing plainly, that their gods were well pleased with such presentations, and therefore they did both exhibit them unto their idols, and did imitate them themselves: but as for that (I know not indeed well what) honest instruction, and good counsel, which was taught in such secret, and unto so few, that I am sure was not followed, if it be true, that it were taught belike it was rather feared, that too many would know it, than suspected that any few would follow it.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of the salvation attained by the Christian religion

WHY then do these men complain, think you? because that by the name of Christ, they see so many discharged of these hellish bands that such unclean spirits held them in, and of the participation of the same punishment with them. Their ungrateful iniquity hath bound them so strongly in these devilish enormities, that they murmur and eat their galls, when they see the people flock unto the church, to these pure solemnities of Christ, where both sexes are so honestly distinguished by their several places; where they may learn how well to lead their temporal lives here, to become worthy of the eternal hereafter: where the holy doctrine of God's word is read from an eminent place, that all may hear it assure a reward to those that follow it, and a judgment to those that neglect it. Into which place if there chance to come any such as scoff at such precepts, they are presently either converted by a sudden power, or cured by a sacred fear: for there are no filthy sights set forth there, nor any obscenities to be seen, or to be followed; but there, either the commandments of the true God are propounded, His miracles related, His gifts commended, or His graces implored.

CHAPTER XXIX.

An exhortation to the Romans to renounce their Paganism.

LET these rather be the objects of thy desires, thou courageous nation of the Romans, thou progeny of the Reguli, Scævolæ, Scipios, and Fabricii, long after these, discern but the difference between these, and that luxurious, filthy, shameless malevolence of the devils. If nature have given thee any laudable eminence, it must be true piety that must purge and perfect it: impiety contaminates and consumes it. Now then, choose which of these to follow, that thy praises may arise, not from thyself that may be misled, but from the true God, who is without all error. Long ago, wast thou great in popular glory: but as then (as it pleased the providence of the high God), was the true religion wanting, for thee to choose and embrace. But now, awake, and rouse thyself, it is now day, thou art already awake in some of thy children, of whose full virtue, and constant sufferings for the truth we do justly glory: they even these who fighting at all hands against the powers of iniquity, and conquering them all by dying undaunted, have purchased

this¹ possession for us with the price of their blood. To partake of which possession we do now invite and exhort thee, that thou wouldst become a citizen, with the rest, in that city wherein true remission of sins stands as a glorious sanctuary. Give no ear unto that degenerate brood of thine, which barks at the goodness of Christ and Christianity, accusing these times of badness, and yet desiring such as should be worse, by denying tranquillity to virtue, and giving security unto all iniquity: these times didst thou never approve, nor ever desirest to secure thy temporal estate by them. Now then reach up at the heavenly ones, for which, take but a little pains, and thou shalt reap the possession of them, unto all eternity. There shalt thou find no vestal fire, nor stone of the Capitol, but one true God, who will neither limit thee blessedness in quality, nor time, but give thee an empire, both universal, perfect, and eternal. Be no longer led in blindness by these thy illuding and erroneous gods; reject them from thee, and taking up thy true liberty, shake off their damnable subjection. They are no gods, but wicked fiends; and all the empire they can give them is but possession of everlasting pain. Juno did never grieve so much that the Trojans (of whom thou descendest) should arise again to the state of Rome, as these damned devils (whom as yet thou holdest for gods) do envy and repine, that mortal men should ever enjoy the glories of eternity. And thou thyself hast censured them with no obscure note, in affording them such plays, whose actors thou hast branded with express infamy. Suffer us then to plead thy freedom against all those impure devils that imposed the dedication and celebration of their own shame and filthiness upon thy neck and honour. Thou couldst remove and disenable the players of those uncleannesses, from all honours: pray likewise unto the true God, to quit thee from those vile spirits that delight in beholding their own spots, whether they be true (which is most ignominious), or feigned (which is most malicious). Thou didst well in clearing the state of thy city from all such scurrilous offscums as stage-players: look a little further into it: God's Majesty can never delight in that which polluteth man's dignity. How then canst thou hold these powers, that loved such unclean plays, as members of the heavenly society, when thou holdest the men that only acted them, as unworthy to be counted in the worst rank of the members of thy city? The heavenly city is far above thine, where truth is the victory; holiness the dignity, happiness the peace, and eternity the continuance. Far is it from giving place to such gods, if thy city do cast out such men. Wherefore if thou wilt come to this city, shun all fellowship with the devil. Unworthy are they of honest men's service, that must be pleased with dishonesty. Let Christian reformation sever thee from having any

¹ He means they have been a great enlargement of the true Church of God, upon earth, by suffering so constantly.

commerce with those gods, even as the censor's view separated such men from partaking of thy dignities. But as concerning temporal felicity, which is all that the wicked desire to enjoy; and temporal affliction, which is all they seek to avoid, hereafter we mean to show, that the devils neither have nor can have any such power of either, as they are held to have (though if they had, we are bound rather to condemn them all, than to worship them, for these benefits, which seeing that thereby we should utterly debar ourselves of that, which they repine that we should ever attain), hereafter (I say) shall it be proved, that they have no such power of those things, as these think they have, that affirm that they are to be worshipped for such ends. And here shall this book end.





THE THIRD BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

Of the adverse casualties which only the wicked do fear : and which the world hath always been subject unto, whilst it remained in Paganism.

WHAT we have already spoken I think is sufficient, concerning the depraved state of men's minds and manners, which is principally to be avoided : that in these cases these false imaginary gods did never endeavour to lighten their servants of any of these inconveniences, but rather added unto their loads and furthered their deprivations. Now, I see it is time to take those evils in hand, which are the only things that these men are so loth to endure, above and beyond all others, as famine, sickness, war, invasion, thralldom, slaughter, and such other like, as we have recited in our first book : for these things alone are they, which evil men account for evils, that do not, nor are not of power to make men any way evil : nor are these wretches ashamed to give good things their due praise, and yet keep evil still themselves that are the praises of good : being far more offended at the badness of their lands, than of their lives ; as if man were made to enjoy all things except himself : but notwithstanding all this, their gods (for all their dutiful observance) never did go about to restrain the effects of those evils, which their servants are so sore afraid of, nor ever withheld them from lighting upon them, for the world was oppressed with diverse extreme and sore calamities at several times, long before the redemption ; and yet (as touching those times) what other gods but those idols were there worshipped in any part of the world except only amongst the Jews and by some other peculiar persons whom it pleased the unsearchable wisdom of the great God to illuminate. But because I study to be brief, I will not stand upon the world's miseries in general : only what is Rome's peculiars, or the Roman Empire's, I mean to relate : that is, such afflictions as before the coming of Christ, fell either upon the city itself, or

upon such provinces as belonged unto it, either by conquest or society, as members of the body of that commonweal, of those I mean to speak somewhat in particular.

CHAPTER II.

Whether the gods, to whom the Romans and the Greeks exhibited like worship, had sufficient cause given them to let Troy be destroyed.

FIRST therefore of Troy, or Ilium, whence the Romans claim the descent (for we may not omit nor neglect what we touched at in the first book): why was Troy besieged, and destroyed by the Greeks that adored the same gods that it did; the privy of Laomedon: the father (say some) was wreaked in this sack, upon Priam the son. Well then it is true that Apollo and Neptune served as workmen under the same Laomedon, for otherwise the tale is not true that says that he promised them pay and broke his oath unto them afterwards. Now cannot I but marvel that such a great foreknower, as Apollo was, would work for Laomedon, and could not foretell that he would deceive him: nor is it decent to affirm that Neptune his uncle Jupiter's brother, and king of all the sea, should have no foresight at all in things to come. For Homer brings him in foretelling great matters of the progeny of Æneas, whose successors built Rome (yet is Homer reported to have lived before the building of Rome), nay more, he saveth Æneas from Achilles by a cloud, desiring to raise this perjured city of Troy though it were his own handiwork, as Virgil declareth of him. Thus then these two gods, Neptune and Apollo, were utterly ignorant of Laomedon's intention to delude them, and built the walls of Troy for thanks and for thankless persons. Look now, whether it be a worse matter to put confidence in such gods, or to consume them. But Homer himself (it seems) did hardly believe this tale, for he makes Neptune to fight against Troy, and Apollo for it; whereas the fable gives them both one cause of being offended, namely Laomedon's perjury. Let those therefore that believe such reports be ashamed to acknowledge such deities: and those that believe them not, let them never draw cavils from the Trojan's perjuries, nor marvel that the gods should hate perjuries at Troy, and love them at Rome. For otherwise, how could it come to pass, that besides the abundance of all other corruption in the city of Rome, there should be such a great company in Catiline's conspiracy that lived only by their tongues' practice in perjury and their hands in murder? what other thing did the senators by taking bribes so plentifully and by so many false judgments? what other thing did the people by selling of their voices, and playing double in all things

wherein they dealt, but heap up the sin of perjury? for even in this universal corruption, the old custom of giving and taking oaths was still observed, but that was not for the restraint of wickedness by awe of religion, but to add perjury also unto the rest of their monstrous exorbitances.

CHAPTER III.

That the gods could not justly be offended at the adultery of Paris, using it so freely and frequently themselves.

WHEREFORE there is no reason to say that these gods who supported the empire of Troy were offended with the Trojans' perjury, when the Greeks did prevail against all their protections. Nor is it, as some say, in their defence, that the anger at Paris' adultery made them give over Troy's defence, for it is their custom to practise sin themselves, and not to punish it in others. "The Trojans," saith Sallust, "as I have heard, were the first founders and inhabitants of Rome: those were they that came away with Æneas, and wandered without any certain abode." If Paris' act were then to be punished by the gods' judgments, it was either to fall upon the Trojans, or else upon the Romans, because Æneas' mother was chief agent therein. But how should they hate it in Paris, when as they hated it not in Venus, one of their company, who (to omit her other pranks) committed adultery with Anchises and by him was begotten Æneas. Or why should his fault anger Menelaus, and her's please Vulcan? I do not think the gods such abasers of their wives, or of themselves, as to vouchsafe mortal men to partake with them in their loves. Some perhaps will say I scoff at these fables: and handle not so grave a cause with sufficient gravity: why then if you please let us not believe that Æneas is son to Venus, I am content, so that Romulus likewise be not held to be Mars' son. If the one be so, why is not the other so also? Is it lawful for the gods to meddle carnally with women, and yet unlawful for the men to meddle carnally with goddesses: a hard, or rather an incredible condition, that what was lawful for Mars by Venus' law should not be lawful for Venus by her own law. But they are both confirmed by the Roman authority, for Cæsar of late, believed no less that Venus was his grandmother, than Romulus of old believed that Mars was his father.

CHAPTER IV.

Of Varro's opinion, that it is meet in policy that some men should feign themselves to be begotten of the gods.

BUT do you believe this, will some say? not I truly. For Varro, one of their most learned men, doth (though faintly, yet almost plainly) confess that they all are false. But that it is profitable for the cities (saith he) to have their greatest men, their generals and governors, believe that they are begotten of gods, though it be never so false: that their minds being as illustrate, with part of their parents' deity, may be the more daring to undertake, more fervent to act, and so more fortunate to perform affairs of value. Which opinion of Varro (by me here laid down), you see how it opens a broad way to the falsehood of this belief: and teacheth us to know, that many such fictions may be inserted into religion, whensoever it shall seem useful unto the state of the city, to invent such fables of the gods. But whether Venus could bear Æneas by Anchises, or Mars beget Romulus of Sylvia, Numitor's daughter, that we leave as we find it, undiscussed. For there is almost such a question ariseth in our Scriptures. Whether the wicked angels did commit fornication with the daughters of men, and whether that whereupon came giants, that is, huge and powerful men, who increased and filled all the earth? ¹

CHAPTER V.

That it is altogether unlikely that the gods revenged Paris' fornication, since they permitted Rhea's to pass unpunished.

WHEREFORE now let us argue both the causes in one. If it be certain that we read of Æneas' and Romulus' mothers, how can it be that the gods should disallow of the adulteries of mortal men, tolerating it so fully and freely in these particulars? If it be not certain, howsoever, yet cannot they distaste the dishonesties of men, that are truly detected, seeing they take pleasure in their own, though they be but feigned: besides, if that of Mars with Rhea be of no credit, why then no more is this of Venus with Anchises. Then let not Rhea's cause be covered with any pretence of the like in the gods. She was a virgin priest of Vesta, and therefore with far more justice should the gods have scourged the Romans for her offence, than the Trojans for that of Paris: for the ancient Romans themselves did punish such vestals

¹ Gen. vi.

as they took in this offence, by burying them quick : never censuring others who were faulty in this kind with death (but ever with some smaller penalty), so great was their study to correct the offences of persons appertaining to religion, with all severity above others.

CHAPTER VI.

Of Romulus' murder of his brother, which the gods never revenged.

Now I will say more. If those deities took such grievous and heinous displeasure at the enormities of men, that for Paris' misdemeanour they would needs utterly subvert the city of Troy by fire and sword : much more then ought the murder of Romulus' brother to incense their furies against the Romans, than the rape of Menelaus' wife against the Trojans. Parricide in the first original of a city, is far more odious than adultery in the wealth and height of it. Nor is it at all pertinent unto our purpose, whether this murder were commanded or committed by Romulus, which many impudently deny, many do doubt, and many do dissemble. We will not entangle ourselves in the labyrinth of history, upon so laborious a quest. Once, sure it is, Romulus' brother was murdered, and that neither by open enemies, nor by strangers. If Romulus either willed it, or wrought it, so it is : Romulus was rather the chief of Rome than Paris of Troy. Why should the one then set all his gods against his country for but ravishing another man's wife, and the other obtain the protection of the same gods for murdering of his own brother? If Romulus be clear of this imputation, then is the whole city guilty of the same crime howsoever, in giving so total an assent unto such a supposition, and instead of killing a brother, hath done worse in killing a father. For both the brethrers were fathers and founders to it alike, though villainy bar the one from dominion. There is small reason to be shown (in my opinion) why the Trojans deserved so ill, that their gods should leave them to destruction, and the Romans so well, that they would stay with them to their augmentation ; unless it be this, that being so overthrown and ruined in one place, they were glad to fly away to practise their illusions in another ; nay, they were more cunning than so ; they both stayed still at Troy to deceive (after their old custom) such as afterwards were to inhabit there ; and likewise departed unto Rome, that having a greater scope to use their impostures there, they might have more glorious honours assigned them to feed their vain-glorious desires.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the subversion of Ilium, by Fimbria, a Captain of Marius' faction.

IN the first heat of the civil wars, what had poor Ilium done that Fimbria, the veriest villain of all Marius' set, should raze it down with more fury and cruelty than ever the Grecians had showed upon it before? For in their conquest, many escaped captivity by flight, and many avoided death by captivity. But Fimbria charged in an express edict, that not a life should be spared, and made one fire of the city, and all the creatures within it. Thus was Ilium requited, not by the Greeks whom her wrongs had provoked, but by the Romans whom her ruins had propagated: their gods in this case (alike adored of both sides) doing just nothing; or rather, being able to do just nothing; what, were the gods' gone from their shrines that protected this town since the repaying of it after the Grecian victory? If they were, show me why? But still, the better citizens I find the worse gods. They shut out Fimbria, to keep all for Sylla; he set the town and them on fire, and burned them both into dust and ashes. And yet in meantime Sylla's side was stronger, and even now was he working out his power by force of arms; his good beginnings as yet felt no crosses. How then could the Ilians have dealt more honestly or justly? or more worthy of the protection of Rome? than to save a city of Romans, for better ends, and to keep out a parricide of his country's common good? But how they sped, let the defenders of these gods observe. They forsook the Ilians, being adulterers, and left their city to the fires of the Greeks, that from her ashes chaster Rome might arise. But why did they leave her the second time, being Romans allied, not rebelling against her noble daughter, but keeping her faith sincerely unto Rome's best parts and powers? Why did they let her be demolished so utterly, not by the valorous Grecians, but by a barbarous Roman? Or, if the gods favoured not Sylla's endeavours, for whom this city kept herself, why did they attend his fortunes with such happy success elsewhere? Does not this prove them rather flatterers of the fortunate than favourers of the wretched? And therefore they had not forsaken Ilium utterly when it was utterly destroyed; no, no, the devils will still keep a watchful eye for advantage to deceive. For when all the images were burned together with the town, only Minerva was found under all the ruins of her temple, as Livy writes, untouched; not that it should be said, "You patron gods that always Troy protect:" but that it should not be said, "The gods were gone and left their altars bare." In their defence they were permitted to save that image, not that they might thereby prove themselves powerful, but that we might thereby prove them to have been present.

CHAPTER VIII.

Whether it was convenient to commit Rome to the custody of the Trojan gods.

WHEREFORE seeing Troy had left so plain a lesson for all posterity to observe ; what discretion was there shown in the commending of Rome to the protection of the Trojan gods ? O but, will some say, they were settled at Rome when Fimbria spoiled Ilium : were they so ? whence comes the image of Minerva then ? But well : it may be they were at Rome when Fimbria razed Ilium, and at Ilium when the Gauls sacked Rome. And being quick of hearing, and swift in motion, as soon as ever the geese called them, they came all on a cluster, to defend what was left, the Capitol. But they were not called soon enough to look to the rest, or else it should not have been as it was.

CHAPTER IX.

Whether it be credible, that the gods procured the peace that lasted all Numa's reign.

It is thought also that these are they that helped Numa Pompilius, Romulus' successor, to preserve that continual peace that lasted all the time of his reign, and to shut the gates of Janus' temple ; and that because he deserved it at their hands, in instituting so many sacrifices for the Romans to offer unto their honour. In earnest, the peace that this prince procured was thankworthy, could he have applied it accordingly, and (by avoiding so pernicious a curiosity) have taken more pains in inquiry after the true divinity. But being as it was, the gods never gave him that quiet leisure : but it may be they had not deluded him so foully, had they not found him so idle. For the less that his business was, the more time had they to entrap him : for Varro records all his courses, and endeavours to associate himself and his city with those imaginary gods : all which (if it please God) shall be rehearsed in their due place. But now, since we are to speak of the benefits which are pretended to come from those feigned deities : peace is a good benefit : but it is a benefit given by the true God only, as the rain, the sun, and all other helps of man's transitory life are ; which are common even to the ungracious and ungrateful persons as well as the most thankful. But if these Roman gods had any power to bestow such a benefit as peace is upon Numa, or upon Rome, why did they never do it after, when the Roman empire was in greater majesty and magni-

ficence? were their sacrifices more powerful at their first institution, than at any time after? Nay, many of them then were not as yet instituted, but remained unspoken of until afterwards, and then they were instituted indeed, and kept for commodity sake. How cometh it then to pass that Numa's forty-three, or as some say, thirty-nine years were passed in such full peace? and yet those sacrifices being neither instituted nor celebrated until afterwards; and the gods whom these solemnities invited, being but now become the guardians and patrons of the state, after so many hundred years from Rome's foundation until the reign of Augustus, there is but one year reckoned, and that is held as wholly miraculous, which falling after the first African war, gave the Romans just leave to shut up the gates of war's temple?

CHAPTER X.

Whether the Romans might justly desire that their city's estate should arise to pre-eminence by such furious wars, when it might have rested firm, and quiet, in such a peace as Numa procured.

WILL they reply (think you) that the imperial state of Rome had no other means of augmentation but by continuance of wars, nor any fitter course to diffuse the honour thereof than this? A fit course surely! why should any empire make disquiet the scale unto greatness? In this little world of man's body, is it not better to have a mean stature with an unmoved health, then a huge bigness with intolerable sickness? to take no rest at the point where thou shouldst rest, the end? but still to confound the greater growth with the greater grief? what evil had there been, nay what good had there not been if those times had lasted that Sallust so applauded, saying: "Kings in the beginning (for this was first imperial name on earth) were diverse in their goodness: some exercised their corporal powers, some their spiritual, and men's lives in those times were without all exorbitance of habit or affect, each one keeping in his own compass:" why should the empire be advanced by those practices that Virgil so detests? saying—

"Deterior donec paulatim et decolor ætas
Et belli rabies, et amor successit habendi."

'Until perverse declining times succeed:
World-frighting wars, and ill-pretended need.'

But indeed the Romans as yet had a just defence for their so continued contentions and wars: because, their foes engirting them with such universal invasions, it was the very necessity to save themselves, and not their endeavour to become powerful over others that put weapons

into their hands. Well be it so. For (as Sallust writes) when they had well settled their estates by laws, customs, and possessions, and seemed sufficiently potent, then, as it is in most affairs of mortality, out of their eminence arose envy in others, which armed many of their neighbour kings against them, and withheld most of their reputed friends from assisting them; the rest standing afraid, and afar off. But the Romans themselves, sticking to war's tackling, cheered up one another to encounter the foe with courage, standing in their arms as the bulwarks of their freedom, their country, and their kindred. And having made their virtue break through all mists of opposed dangers, they aided those that affected them, returning more gain of friendship to their estate by being the agents of bounty than the objects, rather by doing good turns to others, than by receiving such of others. In these forms of augmenting herself, Rome kept a good decorum. But now, in Numa's reign, were there any injuries of enemy or invasions, concurring to disturb this peace of his time, or were there not? If Rome were as then molested with wars, and yet did not oppose hostility with hostility; then those means that kept the foe from being overthrown in fight, and yet without strokes compelled them to composition; those very means alone should be still of power to shut Janus' gates, and keep this peace continually in Rome. Which if it were not in their power to do, then verily the Romans had not their peace as long as it pleased the gods to allow it them, but as long as the neighbour princes listed not to invade and trouble them; unless those gods had farmed that which lies not in theirs but other's power, unto each one at their pleasure, as it were by the letter patent. There is much difference truly in these devils working upon men's proper infirmities, whether they work with terrors, or with incitations. But howsoever, were they of this power always, and were not controlled by a superior sovereignty, they would still be practising their authorities in wars and slaughters: which (as they fall out in truth) ordinarily, are rather the effects of mortal men's peculiar passions and affections, than direct practices of the damned spirits.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the statue of Apollo at Cumæ, that shed tears (as men thought) for the Grecians' miseries, though he could not help them.

NOTWITHSTANDING that there are many of these wars and conquests that fall out quite against those gods' likings, the Roman history itself (to omit those fables that do not tell one truth for a thousand lies) shall give clear proof, for therein we read that the statue of Apollo

Cumane, in the time of the Romans' wars against the Achaians and King Aristonicus, did persist four days together in continual weeping: which prodigy amazing the soothsayers, they held it fit to cast the statue into the sea, but the ancients of Cumæ dissuaded it, and showed them that it had done so likewise in the wars both against Antiochus, and Perseus, testifying also, that both these wars succeeding fortunately unto Rome, the Senate sent their gifts and oblations unto the statue of Apollo. And then, the soothsayers having learned wit, answered, that the weeping of Apollo was lucky to the Romans, because that Cumæ was a Greek colony, and that the statue's tears did but portend mishap unto the country from whence it came, namely unto Greece. And soon after, they heard how Aristonicus was taken prisoner, and this was the cause of Apollo's woes, shown in his tears. And as touching this point, not unfitly, though fabulously, are the devil's tricks plainly discovered in the fictions of the poets: Diana was sorry for Camilla in Virgil: and Hercules wept for the death of Pallas. And it may be that upon this ground Numa in his great peace given him, he neither knew nor sought to know by whom, bethinking himself in his idleness unto what gods he should commit the preservation of the Romans' fortunes (never dreaming that it is only the great and almighty God that has regard of these inferior things) and remembering himself, that the gods that Æneas brought from Troy, could neither preserve the estate of the Trojans, nor that of the Lavinians erected by Æneas, into any good continuance, he thought fit to seek out some others, to join with the former were gone with Romulus to Rome and that were afterwards to go, at the destruction of Alba either to keep them from running away, or to help them when they saw them too weak.

CHAPTER XII.

How fruitless their multitude of gods was unto the Romans, who induced them, beyond the institution of Numa.

NOR could Rome be content with those sacrifices which Numa had in such plentiful measure prescribed, for it had not as yet the great temple of Jupiter. For it was Tarquin that built the Capitol a good while after. And Æsculapius came afterwards from Epidaurus unto Rome: because he being a most expert physician, might practise in so famous a city with the greater credit. The mother of the gods also (of whence, who can tell) came thither from Pessinuns, it being a thing unmeet for the son to be the chief god of the Capitol, and the mother to lie obscured I know not where: but if she be the mother of all the gods, she did not follow all her children unto Rome, but left some to follow her thither.

I wonder whether she were dam unto Cynocephalus, that came out of Egypt long after or no. Whether the goddess Febris be one of her children or no, let Æsculapius, her nephew, look to that. But where-soever she was born, I hope the stranger gods dare not call a goddess base, that is a Roman citizen. Well, Rome being placed under the protection of so many gods (as who can reckon up?) both of Italians, and foreigners, both of heaven, earth, hell, seas, fountains, and rivers, and as Varro says, both certain and uncertain, and as it is in creatures, both male and female of all these several kinds : methinks that Rome having all these to be her tutors, should never have tasted of such intolerable troubles as I mean to relate briefly out of their huger multitude. The great smoke she sent up was like a beacon, and called to many gods to her defence : unto all which, the priests erecting several monuments, and several mysteries, enflamed the fury of the true God in far greater measure, to whom only all these institutions and rites were belonging. Truly, Rome thrived a great deal better, when she had far fewer protectors : but growing greater, like as a ship calls in more sailors, so called she in more gods : doubting (I think) that those few (under whom she had passed a peaceable revolution before, in comparison of that that followed) were not now of sufficiency to defend her greatness, it was so much augmented. For at first, under the kings themselves (excepting Numa, of whom we spake before), what a mischievous beginning of dissension was that, wherein Romulus killed his one and only brother?

CHAPTER XIII.

By what right the Romans attained their first wives.

IN like manner, neither Juno (for all that she was now as her husband was, good friends with the Romans) nor Venus could help her son's progeny to honest and honourable marriages, but suffered this want to grow so hurtful unto them, that they were driven to get them wives by force, and soon after were compelled to go into the field against their wives' own fathers, and the wretched women being yet scarcely reconciled to their husbands for this wrong offered them, were now endowed with their fathers' murders and kindred's blood ; but in this conflict the Romans had the luck to be conquerors. But oh, what worlds of wounds, what numbers of funerals, what oceans of bloodshed, did those victories cost ! For one only father-in-law Cæsar, and for one only son-in-law Pompey (the wife of Pompey, and daughter to Cæsar being dead), with what true feeling, and just cause of sorrow doth Lucan cry out—

“ *Bella per Emathios plus quam civilia campos,
Jusque datum scelere canimus* ”——

‘ Wars worse than civil in the Emathian plains,
And right left spoil to rage we sing ’——

Thus then the Romans conquered, that they might now return and embrace the daughters with arms imbrued in the blood of the fathers: nor durst the poor creatures weep for their slaughtered parents, for fear to offend their conquering husbands: but all the time of the battle stood with their vows in their mouths and knew not for which side to offer them. Such marriages Bellona (and not Venus) bestowed upon the Romans: or perhaps Alecto, that filthy hellish fury, now that Juno was agreed with them, had more power upon their bosoms now, than she had then, when Juno entreated her help against Æneas. Truly Andromacha’s captivity was far more tolerable than these Roman marriages; for though she lived servile, yet Pyrrhus after he had once embraced her, would never kill Trojan more. But the Romans slaughtered their own step-fathers in the field, whose daughters they had already enjoyed in their beds. Andromacha’s estate secured her from further fears, though it freed her not from precedent sorrows: but these poor souls being matched to these stern warriors, could not but fear at their husbands going to battle, and wept at their return, having no way to freedom either by their fears or tears. For they must either (in piety) bewail the death of their friends and kinsfolk, or (in cruelty) rejoice at the victories of their husbands. Besides (as war’s chance is variable), some lost their husbands by their fathers’ swords; and some lost both, by the hand of each other. For it was no small war that Rome at that time waged. It came to the besieging of the city itself, and the Romans were forced to rely upon the strength of their walls and gates, which being gotten open by a wile, and the foe being entered within the walls, even in the very market-place was there a most woful and wicked battle, struck betwixt the fathers-in-law and the sons. And here were the ravishers conquered maugre their beards, and driven to fly into their own houses, to the great stain of all their precedent (though badly and bloodily gotten) conquests: for here Romulus himself, despairing of his soldiers’ valour, prayed unto Jupiter to make them stand, and hereupon got Jupiter his surname of Stator. Nor would these butcheries have ever been brought unto any end, but that the silly ravished women came running forth with torn and dishevelled hair, and falling at their parents’ feet, with passionate entreaties, instead of hostile arms, appeased their justly enraged valours. And then was Romulus, that could not endure to share with his brother, compelled to divide his kingdom with Tatius, the king of the Sabines: but how long would he away with them, that misliked the fellowship of his own twin-born brother? So Tatius being

slain, he, to become the greater deity, took possession of the whole kingdom. Oh what rights of marriage were these, what firebrands of war; what leagues of brotherhood, affinity, union, or deity! And ah, what lives the citizens lastly led, under so huge a bed-roll of gods' guardians! You see what copious matter this place affords, but that our intention bids us remember what is to follow, and falls on discourse to other particulars.

CHAPTER XIV.

How impious that war was, which the Romans began with the Albans, and of the nature of those victories which ambition seeks to obtain.

BUT when Numa was gone, what did the succeeding kings? O how tragical (as well on the Romans' side as on the Albans') was that war between Rome and Alba? Because (forsooth) the peace of Numa was grown loathsome, therefore must the Romans and the Albans begin alternate massacres, to so great an endamaging of both their estates: and Alba, the daughter of Ascanius, Æneas' son (a more appropriate mother unto Rome than Troy), must by Tullus Hostilius' provocation, be compelled to fight with Rome itself, her own daughter. And fighting with her, was afflicted, and did afflict, until the continual conflicts had utterly tired both the parties. And then they were fain to put the final ending of the whole war to six brethren, three Horatii on Rome's side, and three Curiatii on Alba's. So two of the Horatii fell by the three other: and the three other fell by the third only of the Horatii. Thus got Rome the upper hand, yet so hardly, as of six combatants, only one survived. Now who were they that lost on both sides? who were they that lamented but Æneas' progeny, Ascanius' posterity, Venus' offspring, and Jupiter's children? for this war was worse than civil, where the daughter city bore arms against the mother. Besides, this brethren's fight was closed with a horrid and an abominable mischief. For in the time of the league between both cities, a sister of the Horatii was espoused to one of the Curiatii, who seeing her brother return with the spoils of her dead spouse, and bursting into tears at this heavy fight, was run through the body by her own brother in his heat and fury. There was more true affection in this one poor woman (in my judgment) than in all the whole Roman nation besides. She did not deserve to be blamed for bewailing that he was slain to whom she owed her faith (or that her brother had slain him to whom he himself perhaps had promised her his sister). For pious Æneas is commended in Virgil for bewailing him whom he had slain as an enemy. And Marcellus, viewing the fair city Syracuse,

being then to be made a prey to ruin by the arms of his conduct, revolving the inconstancy of mortal affairs, pitied it, and bewailed it: I pray you then give thus much leave to a poor woman, in tender affection, faultlessly to bewail her spouse, slain by her brother, since that warlike men have been praised for deploring their enemy's estate in their own conquests. But when this one wretched soul lamented thus, that her love had lost his life by her brother's hand, contrariwise did all Rome rejoice, that she had given their mother so mighty a foil, and exulted in the plenty of the allied blood that she had drawn. What face then have you to talk of your victories and your glories hereby gotten? Cast but aside the mask of mad opinion, and all these villainies will appear naked, to view, peruse, and censure: weigh but Alba's cause and Troy's together, and you shall find a full difference. Tullus began these wars, only to renew the discontinued valours and triumphs of his countrymen. From this ground arose these horrid wars, between kindred and kindred, which notwithstanding Sallust does but overrun, *sicco pede*: for having briefly recollected the precedent times, when men lived, without aspiring or other affects, each man contenting himself with his own. "But after that Cyrus," quoth he, "in Asia, and the Lacedemonians and Athenians in Greece, began to subdue the countries and cities within their reaches, then desire of sovereignty grew a common cause of war, and opinion placed the greatest glory in the largest empire," &c. Thus far he. This desire of sovereignty is a deadly corrosive to human spirits. This made the Romans triumph over Alba, and gave the happy success of their mischiefs, the style of glories. Because, as our Scripture says; "The wicked maketh boast of his heart's desire, and the unjust dealer blesseth himself."¹ Take off then these deluding veils from things, and let them appear as they are indeed. Let none tell me, he, or he is great, because he has coped with and conquered such and such an one. Fencers can fight and conquer, and those bloody acts of theirs in their combat do never pass ungraced. But I hold it rather fit to expose a man's name to all taint of idleness, than to purchase renown from such bad employment. But if two fencers or sword-players should come upon the stage, one being the father, and another the son, who could endure such a spectacle? how then can glory attend the arms of the daughter city against the mother? do ye make a difference in that their field was larger than the fencer's stage, and yet they fought not in view of the theatre but the whole world, presenting a spectacle of eternal impiety both to the present times, and to all posterity? But your great guardian gods bore all this unmoved, sitting as spectators of this tragedy, whilst for the three Curatii that were slain, the sister of the Horatii

¹ Ps. x. 3.

must be stabbed by the hand of her own brother, to make even the number with her two other brethren, that Rome's conquest might cost no less blood than Alba's loss did : which, as the fruit of the victory was utterly subverted : even this place, which the gods (after Ilium, which the Greeks destroyed, and Lavinium, where Latinus placed fugitive Æneas as king) had chosen to be their third place of habitation. But it may be they were gone hence also, and so it came to be razed : yes sure, all they that kept the state of it up, were departed from their shrines. Then they left Alba where Amulius had reigned, having thrust out his brother, and went to dwell at Rome, where Romulus had reigned, having killed his brother. Nay, but before this demolition (say they) the people of Alba were all transported unto Rome, to make one city of both. Well be it so, yet the city, that was the seat royal of Ascanius, and the third habitation of the Trojan gods, was utterly demolished. And much blood was spilt, before they came to make this miserable confusion of both these peoples together. Why should I particularise the often renovation of these wars under so many several kings ; which when they seemed to be ended in victory, began so often again in slaughters, and after combination and league, broke out so fresh between kindred and kindred, both in the predecessors and their posterity ? No vain emblem of their misery was that continual standing open of Janus' gate : so that for all the help of these god guardians, there was not one king of them that continued his reign in peace.

CHAPTER XV.

Of the lives and deaths of the Roman Kings.

BUT how ended their kings still ? for Romulus, let that flattering fable look to him, which hath sent him up into heaven. Let some of their own writers judge, that affirm him torn in pieces by the Senate for his pride, and that I know not whom, one Julius Proculus, was suborned to say, that he appeared unto him, commanding him to bid Rome give him divine honour, and so was the fury of the people surprised. Besides, an eclipse of the sun falling out at the same time, wrought so upon the ignorance of the rude vulgar, that they ascribed all this unto Romulus' worth and glories. As though that if the sun had mourned, as they thought it did, they should not rather imagine that it was because Romulus was murdered, and therefore that the sun turned his light from such a villainy ; as it did indeed when our Lord and Saviour was crucified by the bloody and reprobate Jews. That the eclipse which befell at our Saviour's death, was quite against the regular course of the

stars, is hence most plain, because it was the Jew's Easter: which is continually kept at the full of the moon. But the regular eclipse of the sun never happens but in the changing of the moon. Now Cicero intimates plainly that this admission of Romulus into heaven, was rather imagined than performed; there where in Scipio's words (*De repub.*) speaking of his praise "He attained so much," saith he, "that being not to be found after the sun's eclipse, he was accounted as admitted into the number of the gods: which opinion, there is no man without admirable merit of virtue can purchase." Now whereas he says, that he was not to be found, he glances doubtless either at the secrecy of the murder, or intimates the violence of the tempest. For other writers add unto this eclipse a sudden storm, which either was the agent or the occasion of Romulus' murder. Now Tully in the same books, speaking of Hostilius (third king after Romulus) who was stricken to death with thunder, says, that he was not reckoned amongst the gods, because that which was proved true (that is, that which they believed was so) in Romulus the Romans would not embase, by making it too common, in giving it to the one as well as the other. And in his "Invectives" he says plainly: "It is our goodwill and fame, that hath made Romulus (this city's founder) a god." To show that it was not so indeed, but only spread into a report by their goodwill to him for his worth and virtues. But in his dialogue called "Hortensius," disputing of regular eclipses, he says more plainly: "to produce such a darkness as was made by the eclipse of the sun at Romulus' death." Here he feared not to say directly his death, by reason he sustained the person of a disputant, rather than a panegyric. But now for the other kings of Rome, excepting Numa, and Ancus Martius, that died of infirmities, what horrible ends did they all come to? Hostilius, the subverter of Alba, as I said, was consumed, together with his whole house, by lightning. Tarquinius Priscus was murdered by his predecessor's sons: and Servius Tullius, by the villainy of his son-in-law Tarquin the Proud, who succeeded him in his kingdom. Nor yet were any of the gods gone from their shrines, for all this so heinous a parricide, committed upon this so good a king, though it be affirmed that they served wretched Troy in worse manner, in leaving it to the licentious fury of the Greeks, only for Paris' adultery. Nay, Tarquin having shed his father-in-law's blood, seized on his estate himself. This parricide got his crown by his step-father's murder, and afterwards glorying in monstrous wars and massacres, and even building the Capitol up, with hence-got spoils: this wicked man, the gods were so far from forsaking, that they sat and looked on him, nay and would have Jupiter their principal to sit, and sway all things in that stately temple, namely in that black monument of parricide, for Tarquin was not innocent, when he built the Capitol, and for his after-guilt, incurred expulsion: no, foul and inhuman murder was his very ladder to that state

whereby he had his means to build the Capitol. And whereas the Romans expelled him the State and city afterwards, the cause of that (namely Lucretia's rape) grew from his son and not from him, who was both ignorant and absent when that was done: for then was he at the siege of Ardea, and a fighting for the Romans' good: nor know we what he would have done had he known of this fact of his son, yet without all trial or judgment, the people expelled him from his empire: and having charged his army to abandon him, took them in at the gates, and shut him out. But he himself after he had plagued the Romans (by their borderer's means) with extreme wars, and yet at length being not able to recover his estate, by reason his friends failed him: retired himself (as it is reported) unto Tusculum, a town fourteen miles from Rome, and there enjoying a quiet and private estate, lived peaceably with his wife, and died far more happily than his father-in-law did, who fell so bloodily by his means, and his own daughter's consent, as it is credibly affirmed, and yet this Tarquin was never surnamed cruel nor wicked by the Romans, but the Proud; it may be because their own pride would not let them bear with his: as for the crime of killing that good king his step-father, they showed how light they made of that, in making him murder the king, wherein I make a question whether the gods were not guilty in a deeper manner than he, by rewarding so highly a guilt so horrid, and not leaving their shrines all at that instant when it was done, unless some will say for them, that they staid still at Rome, to take a deeper revenge upon the Romans, rather than to assist them, seducing them with vain victories, and tossing them in unceasing turmoils. Thus lived the Romans in those so happy times, under their kings, even until the expelling of Tarquin the Proud, which was about two hundred and forty three years together, paying so much blood, and so many lives for every victory they got, and yet hardly enlarging their empire the distance of twenty miles' compass without the walls: how far then have they to conquer, and what store of strokes to share, until they come to conquer a city of the Getulians?

CHAPTER XVI.

Of the first Roman Consuls; how the one expelled the other out of his country, and he himself, after many bloody murders, fell by a wound, given him by his wounded foe.

UNTO these times, add the other, wherein (as Sallust says) things were modestly and justly carried, until the fear of Tarquin and the Etrurian war were both ended. For whilst the Etrurians assisted Tarquin's endeavours of reinstalment, Rome quaked under so burthenous a war.

And therefore (says Sallust) were things carried modestly and justly, fear being the cause hereof by restraint, not justice by persuasion. In which short space, O how cruel a course had the year of the two first consuls! The time being yet unexpired, Brutus debased Collatine, and banished him the city: and soon after, perished he himself, having interchanged a many wounds with his foe, having first slain his own sons, and his wife's brothers, because he found them actors in a plot to recall Tarquin. Which deed, Virgil having laudably recited, presently does in gentle manner deplore it: for having said,—

“Natosque pater mala bella moventes
Ad pœnam pulcra pro libertate vocabit.”

‘His sons, convict of turbulent transgression
He kills, to quit his country from oppression.’

Presently in lamenting manner he adds—

“Infelix, utcunque ferent ea facta minores.”

‘Hapless, how ere succeeding times shall ring.’

Howsoever his posterity shall ring of the praise of such an act, yet hapless is he, that gives death's summons to his own sons. But to give some solace to his sorrows, he adds after all—

“Vicit amor patriæ laudumque immensa cupido.”

‘Conquer'd by country's love, and laud's high thirst.’

Now in Brutus' killing of his own sons, and in being killed by Tarquin's son, whom he had hurt, and Tarquin himself surviving him, is not Collatine's wrong well revenged, who being so good a citizen was banished (only because his name was but Tarquin) as well as Tarquin the tyrant. It was the name (you say) that was the cause of this: well, he should have been made to change his name then, and not to abandon his country. Again this word would have been but little missed in his name, if he had been called L. Collatine only. This therefore was no sufficient cause, why he, being one of the first consuls, should be forced to abjure both his honours and his city. But is this injustice, being so detestable, and so useless to the State, fit to be the foundation of Brutus' glory? Did he these things, being conquered by our country's loves, and laud's high thirst? Tarquin being expelled, L. Tarquin Collatine, Lucretia's husband, was joint consul with Junius Brutus: how justly did the people respect the conditions of the man and not the name? But how unjustly did Brutus (having power to deprive him only of the cause of the offence, his name) in depriving him both of his country and place of honour? Thus these evils, thus these thwart effects fell out even then when things were said to be carried so modestly and so justly. And Lucretius, that had Brutus' place, died ere this year

ended. So that P. Valerius that succeeded Collatine, and M. Horatius that had Lucretius' place, ended that hellish and murderous year, which saw itself pass by five consuls. This was the year wherein Rome devised her platform of new government, their fears now beginning to surcease, not because they had no wars, but because those they had were but light ones. But the time being expired wherein things were modestly and justly carried, then followed those which Sallust does thus briefly delineate. Then began the patriots to oppress the people with servile conditions, to judge of life and death as imperiously as the kings had done before, to thrust men from their possessions, to put by all others, and to sway all themselves; with which outrages, and chiefly with their extorted taxes, the people being too much vexed (being bound both to maintain an army and also to pay contributions besides), they rushed up to arms, and entrenched themselves upon Mount Sacer and Aventine; and there they made them Tribunes, and diverse laws; but these discords and tumultuous contentions ended not till the second African war.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the vexations of the Roman estate, after the first beginning of the Consul's rule: and of the little good that their gods all this while did them.

BUT why should I spend so much time in writing of these things, or make others spend it in reading them? How miserable the state of Rome stood all that long time until the second Punic war, how sorely shaken by foreign wars, and intestine discord, Sallust has already made a succinct demonstration. So that their victories never brought any true felicity to the good, but only vain solaces to the wretched, and inductions and enticements to the turbulent, to continue disquiet's progress. Let no wise Roman then be angry with us for saying this; but we need not entreat, we are already assured, they will not. For we use but the words of their own writers, and that with far less gall than themselves meant it, and in less gloss than they spoke it. Yet those do they learn, and those they make their children learn. Then why stomach they me for saying as Sallust says: "Many troubles, seditions, and lastly, civil wars burst out, whilst a few of the greatest, under the honest style of fathers, used the licence of tyrants, nor did the citizens attain the titles of good and bad, according to their deserts in the State (all being foul alike), but he that had most wealth and power to injure, because he defended the present government (as fittest for his turn), he was the only good man." If these writers now held it as pertinent to

an honest man's liberty to be so free-tongued against their own city's corruptions, which otherwise they have been often enforced to commend, in that they had no knowledge of any better state, wherein they might become denizens eternal; what then shall we do, whose trust in God by how much it is firmer, so much ought our tongues to be the freer in repelling the scandal they cast upon our Saviour Christ, with intent to seduce unsettled and unsound minds from that city, where happiness is man's possession unto all eternity? Neither do we load their gods with any more horrid guilt, than their own writers do, whom they read and reverence; what we say, we say it from them, being unable to recite all, or all that they have of this kind. Where then were these gods (which men hold so venerable for the attaining of worldly vanities) when the Romans, whose services they angled for so cunningly, were afflicted so extremely? Where were they when Consul Valerius was slain in defence of the Capitol, when it was scaled by slaves and exiles? It was rather in his power to protect the temple of Jupiter, than in the powers of all that kennel of gods, and their great king, to yield him any help at all. Where were they when the city being so overborne with seditions, was fain to send to Athens to borrow laws, and in that little expectation of quietness, was unpeopled by such a sore famine and pestilence? Where were they besides, when the people in this great famine, elected their first prefect of the provision, and when that in the increase of this dearth, Sp. Æmilius, for distributing of corn over-bountifully amongst the starved people, was brought in suspicion of affecting monarchy, and at the instance of the said prefect, by the means of L. Quintius, dictator, an aged, weak man, he was slain by the hand of Q. Servilius, the general of the horsemen, not without a most dreadful and dangerous tumult in the whole city. Where were they when, at the beginning of a wasteful pestilence, the people, being wholly tired with frustrate invocations, thought it fit to appease them with new bed-spreadings, a thing never done before? Then were there beds brought into the temples and spread in honour of the gods, and hence this sacrifice (nay sacrilege) took the name. Where were they when for ten full years together the Romans never fought against the Veians but they had the worse, until Farius Camillus was fain to help them, whom they kindly banished afterwards for his good service? Where were they when the Gauls took Rome, sacked it, spoiled it, burned it, and made a very shambles of it? Where were they when that great plague destroyed almost all the city, and Camillus amongst the rest, who had saved his thankless country from the Veians, and after from the Gauls? In this pestilence they first brought up their stage-plays, a greater plague than the other, to their conditions though not to their carcases. Where were they, when another sad contagion arose (as it is said) from the poisoning tricks of the matrons, yea of the most

and noblest, whose conditions herein proved worse than all those pestilent airs? Or when the two consuls with their army being shut in the Caudine Straits by the Samnites, were glad to make a base composition with them? And delivering six hundred gentlemen for hostages, went away with all the rest, without arms, without baggage, without anything but their very upper garments? Or when the army perished almost wholly, part by the plague, and part by thunders? Or when in another great mortality the city was forced to fetch Æsculapius (as a physician for her) from Epidaurus, because Jupiter, the king of the Capitol, had ever been so employed in his youth in rapes and adulteries, that these exercises gave him no time to learn physic. Or when the Brutians, Lucans, Samnites, Etrurians, and Senonian Gauls, conspiring altogether, first slew their ambassadors, and then a whole army with the prætor, ten tribunes, and thirteen thousand soldiers? Or then, when the long and fatal sedition in the city, wherein the people at last encamped themselves on Janiculus, having booty-hauled all the whole city? Which mischief grew to such a lamentable pass, that they were glad (for the last refuge in all desperate cases) to create a dictator: Hortensius, who having reunited the people, and recalled them, died in his office, as no dictator had done before, which was a great shame to the gods, now that Æsculapius was come to make one. And then grew wars so fast upon them, that their Proletarii, their broodmen, those that they always forbore for getting of children, being so needy they could not follow the wars themselves, were now, for want of soldiers, compelled to serve themselves? For now did Pyrrhus, that famous and warlike Epirot (being called in by the Tarentines) become Rome's heavy foe: and asking the Oracle of his success, truly Apollo answered him very neatly, in such ambiguous manner, that which way so ere it happened, his deity might stand unblemished: "*Aio te Æacida Romanos vincere posse,*" said he: so that whether Pyrrhus or the Romans had the upper hand, the Oracle need not care, for Apollo speaks true however. After this followed a sore and bloody fight, wherein notwithstanding Pyrrhus was conqueror, so that now he might justly esteem Phœbus a true foreteller, as he understood him; but that in the next conflict the Romans had the better, and in this great hostility arose as great a plague amongst the women: for, ere they could be delivered, being big with child, still they died. Now here Æsculapius had an excuse; he professed himself the prince of physic and not of midwifery. Cattle died also so sore, that one would have thought the world's utter devastation was entered. And then there was a winter how strangely unseasonable! The snow lying in the market-place forty days together in a monstrous depth; all Tiber being frozen quite over. If this had happened in our times, Lord, how it would have been scanned upon. And then for that great pestilence, how many thousand took it hence: (which maugre all Æscula-

pius' drugs) lasting till the next year, they were fain to betake themselves to the books of the Sybils : in which kind of Oracles (as Tully says well in his book "De Divinat") the expounders of them are oftener trusted than otherwise, guess they never so unlikely ; and then it was said that the pestilence raged so because that many of the temples were put unto private men's uses : hereby freeing Æsculapius either from great ignorance, or negligence. But why were these temples turned unto private habitations without prohibition, but only because they saw they had lost too much labour in praying to such a crew of gods so long ; and so becoming wiser by degrees, had left haunting of those places by little and little, and at length abandoned them wholly for the private uses of such as would inhabit them. For those houses that as then, for avoiding of this pestilence, were so diligently repaired if they were not afterwards utterly neglected, and so encroached upon by private men as before ; Varro should be to blame to say (speaking of temples) that many of them were unknown. But in the meantime this fetch was a pretty excuse for the gods, but no cure at all for the pestilence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The miseries of the Romans in the African wars, and the small stead their gods stood them therein.

BUT now in the wars of Africa, victory still hovering doubtfully betwixt both sides, and two mighty and powerful nations using all their might and power to reciprocal ruin, how many petty kingdoms perished herein ? How many fair cities were demolished, or afflicted, or utterly lost ? How far did this disastrous contention spread, to the ruin of so many realms and great estates ? How often were the conquerors on either side conquered ? What store of men (armed and naked) was there that perished ? How many ships were sunk at sea by fight and tempest ? Should we particularise, we should become a direct historiographer. Then Rome being in these deep plunges, ran headlong under those vain and ridiculous remedies : for then were the secular plays renewed by the admonition of the Sybil's books : which institution had been ordained an hundred years before, but was now worn out of all memory, in those so happy times. The high priests also renewed the sacred plays to the hell-gods which the better times had in like manner abolished before : nor was it any wonder to see them now revenged, for the hell-gods desired now to become revellers, being enriched by this continual unceasing world of men : who (like wretches) in following those bloody and unrelenting wars, did nothing but act the devil's revels, and prepare banquets for the infernal spirits. Nor was there a more laudable

accident in all this whole war, than that Regulus should be taken prisoner: a worthy man, and before that mishap a scourge to the Carthaginians: who had ended the African war long before, but that he would have bound the Carthaginians to stricter conditions than they could bear. The most sudden captivity, and the most faithful oath of this man, and his most cruel death, if the gods do not blush at, surely they are brazen-faced, and have no blood in them. Nay, for all this, Rome's walls stood not safe, but tasted of some mischief, and all those within them, for the river Tiber overflowing, drowned almost all the level parts of the city: turning some places as it were into torrents, and some others into fens or lakes: this plague ushered in a worse of fire, which beginning in the market-place, burned all the higher buildings thereabouts, sparing not the harbour and temple of Vesta, where it was so duly kept in, by those not so honourable as damnable votaresses. Now it did not only continue here burning but raging: with the fury whereof the virgins being amazed, Metellus, the high priest, ran into the fire, and was half burned in fetching out of those fatal reliques which had been the ruin of three cities, where they had been resident. The fire never spared him for all he was the priest. Or else the true deity was not there, but was fled before though the fire were there still: but here you see how a mortal man could do Vesta more good than she could do him: for if these gods could not guard themselves from the fire, how could they guard their city which they were thought to guard from burnings and inundations? Truly not a whit, as the thing showed itself: herein we would not object these calamities against the Romans, if they would affirm that all these their sacred observations only aim at eternity, and not at the goods of this transitory world; and that therefore when those corporal things perished, there was yet no loss by that, unto the ends for which they were ordained, because that they might soon be made fit for the same uses again. But now such is their miserable blindness, that they think that those idols that might have perished in this fiery extremity, had power to preserve the temporal happiness of the city: but now seeing that they remained unconsumed, and yet were able to show how such ruins of their safeties and such great mischiefs has befallen the city, this makes them ashamed to change that opinion which they see they cannot possibly defend.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the sad accidents that befell in the second African war, wherein the powers on both sides were wholly consumed.

BUT all too tedious were it to relate the slaughters of both nations in the second African war, they had so many fights both far and near,

that by their own confessions who were rather Rome's commenders than true chroniclers, the conquerors were ever more like to the conquered than otherwise. For when Hannibal arose out of Spain, and broke over the Pyrenean hills, all France, and the very Alps, gathering huge powers, and doing horrible mischiefs in all this long tract, rushing like an inundation into the face of Italy, oh what bloody fields were there pitched, what battles struck! how often did the Romans abandon the field, how many cities fell to the foe, how many were taken, how many were razed? what victories did that Hannibal win, and what glories did he build himself upon the ruined Romans. In vain should I speak of Cannæ's horrible overthrow, where Hannibal's own excessive thirst of blood was so fully glutted upon his foes, that he himself bade hold: whence he sent three bushels of rings unto Carthage, to show how huge a company had fallen at that fight, that they were easier to be measured than numbered: and hence might they conjecture, what a massacre there was of the meaner sort, that had no rings to wear, and that the poorer they were, the more of them perished. Finally, such a defect of soldiers followed this overthrow, that the Romans were fain to get malefactors to go to war for quittance of their guilt; to set all their slaves free, and out of this graceless crew, not to supply their defective regiments, but even to make up a whole army. Nay, these slaves (O let us not wrong them, they are freemen now) wanted even weapons to fight for Rome withal: that they were fain to fetch them out of the temples, as if they should say to their gods, Come, pray let these weapons go, you have kept them long enough to no end: we will see whether our bond-slaves can do more good for us with them, than you gods could yet do: and then the treasury failing, the private estate of each man became public, so that each one giving what he was able, their rings, nay their very bosses (the wretched marks of their dignities) being all bestowed, the Senate themselves (much more the other companies and tribes) left not themselves any money in the world: who could have endured the rages of those men, if they had been driven to this poverty in these our times? seeing we can very hardly endure them as the world goes now, although they have store now to bestow upon stage-players, which as then, they were full fain of, for their uttermost means of safety, to spend upon the soldiers?

CHAPTER XX.

Of the ruin of the Saguntines, who perished for their confederacy with Rome; the Roman gods never helping them.

BUT in all the disasters of the second African war, there was none more lamentable than the dissolution of the Saguntines: these in-

habiting in a city in Spain being sworn friends to the Romans, were destroyed for keeping their faith to them. For Hannibal, breaking the league with Rome, gave here the first occasion of war, engirting the city of Saguntum with a cruel and strait siege: whereof the Romans having intelligence, sent an ambassage to wish Hannibal, to raise his siege: but the Legates being despised by him, went to Carthage, whence (having done nothing) they returned without any redress for the breach of the league, and in the meantime, this city (whilom so stately) was now brought to that misery, that about eight or nine months after the beginning of the siege, the Africans took it and razed it to the very ground. To read how it perished were a horror; much more to write it: yet I will run over it briefly, seeing it is very pertinent to the argument we prosecute. First it was eaten down with famine: for some say it was driven to feed upon the carcases which it harboured. And then being in this labyrinth of languors, yet rather than it would take in Hannibal as a conqueror, the citizens made a huge fire in the market-place, and therein entombed all their parents, wives, children, and friends (after they had slain them first), and lastly themselves. Here now these gluttonous, teacherous, wasteful, cozening, dancing gods should have done somewhat: here they should have done somewhat to help these distressed faithful friends of the Romans, and to save them from perishing, for their loyalty's sake. They were called as witnesses between both when the league was made between Rome and these poor men; who keeping that faith which they had willingly passed, solemnly sworn, and sacredly observed, under their protections, were besieged, afflicted, and subverted by one that had broken all faith, all religion. If the gods with thunder and lightning could frighten Hannibal from Rome's walls, and make him keep aloof from them, they should first have practised this here: for I dare aver, that with far more honesty might they have helped the Romans' friends, being in extremes, for keeping their faith to them, and having then no means nor power, than they did the Romans themselves, that fought for themselves, and had very good forces and purses able to repel Hannibal's powers. If they had been careful guardians of Rome's glory, they would never have left it stained with the sufferance of this sad calamity of the Saguntines. But now how sottish is their belief that think these gods kept Rome from perishing by the hand of victorious Hannibal and the Carthaginians, that could not save Saguntum from perishing for keeping her faith sworn so solemnly to the Romans? If Saguntum had been Christian and had suffered such an extremity for the Gospel (though it ought not as then to have wracked itself by fire nor sword), yet had it endured such for the Gospel, it would have borne it stoutly, by reason of that hope which it would have held in Christ to have been after all crowned by Him with an eternal guerdon.

But as for these false gods, that desire to be and are worshipped only for the assurance of this transitory term of our mortality, what can their attorneys, their orators, say for them in this ruin of the Saguntines, more than they said in that of Regulus? only he was one man, this a whole city, but perseverance in faith was cause of both calamities. For this faith would he return to his foes, and for this would not they turn to their foes. Doth loyalty then grieve the gods? Or may ungrateful cities (as well as men) be destroyed, and yet stand in their gods' liking still? Let them choose whether they like: if the gods be angry at men's keeping of their faith, let them seek faithless wretches to serve them. But if they that serve them and have their favours, be nevertheless afflicted and spoiled; then to what end are they adored? Wherefore let them hold their tongues that think they lost their city because they lost their gods: for though they had them all, they might nevertheless not only complain of misery, but feel it at full, as Regulus and the Saguntines did.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of Rome's ingratitude to Scipio, that freed it from imminent danger, and of the conditions of the citizens in those times that Sallust commends to have been so virtuous.

FURTHERMORE, in the space between the first and second Carthaginian war when, as Sallust says the Romans lived in all concord and content (the remembrance of my theme makes me omit much): in those times of concord and content, Scipio, that "protector and raiser of his country," the rare, admirable ender of that so extreme, so dangerous, and so fatal a war as that of Carthage was, the conqueror of Hannibal, the tamer of Carthage, whose very youth is graced with all praises of religiousness, and divine conversation: this man, so great and so gracious, was forced to give place to the accusations of his enemies, to leave his country, which but for him had been left to destruction, and after his high heroical triumph, to bequeath the remainder of his days to the poor town of Linternum: banishing all affect of his country so far from him, that it is said that he gave express charge at his death, that his body should not in any case be buried in that so ungrateful soil of Rome. Afterwards, in the triumph of Cn. Manlius (Vice-Consul) over the Gallo-Grecians, the luxury of Asia entered, the worst foe Rome ever felt. Guilded beds, and precious coverings got then their first ingress. Then began they to have wenches to sing at their banquets, and many other licentious disorders. But I am to speak of the calamities that they suffered so unwillingly, not of the offences that they committed so lavishly. And therefore what I spake of Scipio, that left

his country for his enemies (having first preserved it from utter ruin) and died a willing exile, that was to our purpose, to show that the Roman gods, from whose temples he drove Hannibal, did never requite him with any the least touch of temporal felicity, for which only they are adored. But because Sallust says that Rome was so well mannered in those days, I thought good to touch at this Asian luxury, that you might understand that Sallust spoke in comparison of the after-times, wherein discord was at the highest flood, and good manners at their lowest ebb. For then (that is, between the second and last African war), the Voconian law was promulgate, that none should make a woman his heir, not were she his only daughter; than which decree, I can see nothing more barbarous and unjust. But indeed the mischiefs that the city suffered were not so many nor so violent in the space betwixt the two Punic wars, as they were at other times: for though they felt the smart of war abroad, yet they enjoyed the sweet of victory; and at home they agreed better than they did in the times of security.

But in the last African war, by the only valour of that Scipio, that therefore was surnamed African, that city, that compared and contended with Rome, was utterly razed to dust and ruined; and then brake in such an inundation of depraved conditions, drawn into the state by security and prosperity, that Carthage might justly be said to have been a more dangerous enemy to Rome in her dissolution, than she was in her opposition. And this continued until Augustus' time, who (methinks) did not abridge the Romans of their liberty, as of a thing which they loved and prized, but as though they had utterly despised it and left it for the taking: then reduced he all things unto an imperial command, renewing and repairing the commonweal, that was become all moth-eaten and rusty with age, vice and negligence. I omit the diverse and diversely arising contentions and battles of all this whole time: that league of Numance, stained with so foul an ignominy, where the chickens flew out of their cages, as presaging some great ill-luck (they say) unto Mancinus, then Consul: so that it seemed that little city that had plagued the Roman army that besieged it so many years, did now begin to be a terror to the Romans' whole estate, and boded misfortune unto those her powers that came against it.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of the edict of Mithridates, commanding every Roman that was to be found in Asia, to be put to death.

BUT as I said, these shall pass: marry not that of Mithridates, King of Asia, who gave direct command, that whatever Roman was to be found

trafficking or travelling anywhere in all Asia, upon one certain day, he should be immediately slain: and it was effected. How dolorous a sight was this, to see men slain in such numbers, wheresoever they were taken, in field, way, town, house, street, court, temple, bed or table, or wheresoever, so suddenly and so wickedly? what sorrows would possess the standers-by, and perhaps the very doers of the deeds themselves, to hear the sad groans of the dying men? unto what extremity were the hosts of lodgings brought now, when they must not only behold those murders committed in their houses, but even help to perform them themselves. To turn so suddenly from gentle humanity unto barbarous cruelty? to do the act of an enemy in peace, and that on his friend, interchanging indeed wounds with the murdered, the murdered being stricken in the body, and the murderer in the mind? and did all these that were thus slain, neglect auguries? had they no gods public or private to ask counsel of, before they betook them unto this travel from whence they were never to return? If this be true, then have they of our times no cause to complain of us, for the neglect of those things, the Romans of old contemned them as vanities. But if they did not, but used to ask counsel of them, then tell me (I pray) to what end was it when other men's powers fell so heavy upon these wretches without all prohibition, or means to avoid them?

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the more private and interior mischiefs, that Rome endured, which were presaged by that prodigious madness of all the creatures that served the use of man.

BUT now let us do what we can to recite those evils which the more domestic they were to Rome, the more miserable they made it: I mean the civil or rather uncivil discords, being now no more seditions but plain wars, and those in the very bowels of the city, wherein so much blood was spilt: where the Senators' powers were now no more bent to altercations and wranglings, but directly to arms and weapons. O what rivers of Romans' blood flowed from the social, servile, and civil wars? how sore a waste fell upon the breast of all Italy from hence? For before that Latium (being associate and confederate with the rest) arose against Rome, all the creatures that were useful unto man, dogs, horses, asses, oxen, and all others besides, that served human occasions, growing suddenly stark mad, and losing all their meekness, ran wild out of the towns into the deserts, fields and forests, flying the company not only of all others, but even of their own masters, and endangering any man that offered to come near them. What a prodigious sign was here?

but if this, being so great a mischief of itself, were but the presage of another, what a mischief must that be then, that was ushered in by such a mischievous presage. If this had befallen in our times, we should be sure to have had these faithless miscreants a great deal madder than the other dogs were.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the civil discord that arose from the seditions of the Gracchi.

THE sedition of the Gracchi about the law Agrarian, gave the first vent unto all the civil wars; for the lands that the nobility wrongfully possessed, they would needs have shared amongst the people, but it was a dangerous thing for them to undertake the righting of a wrong of such continuance, and in the end, it proved indeed their destruction: what a slaughter was there, when Tiberius Gracchus was slain? and when his brother followed him within a while after? the noble and the base were butchered together in tumults and uproars of the people, not in formal justice nor by order of law but all in huggermugger. After the latter Gracchus' slaughter, followed that of L. Opimius, consul, who taking arms in the city against this Gracchus, and killing him and all his fellows, had made a huge slaughter of citizens, by this means having caused three thousand to be executed, that he had condemned by law. By which one may guess, what a massacre there was of all in that tumultuous conflict, since that three thousand were marked out by law, as orderly condemned, and justly slain. He that killed Gracchus, had the weight of his head in gold, for that was his bargain before. And in this fray was M. Fulvius slain, and all his children.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of the temple of Concord, built by the Senate in the place where these seditions and slaughters were effected.

A FINE decree surely was it of the Senate, to give charge for the building of Concord's temple, just in the place where those outrages were acted: that the monument of Gracchus' punishment might be still in the eye of the pleaders, and stand fresh in their memory. But what was this but a direct scoffing of their gods? They built a goddess a temple, who had she been amongst them, would never have suffered such gross breaches of her laws as these were, unless Concord being guilty of this crime, by leaving the hearts of the citizens, deserved there-

fore to be imprisoned in this temple. Otherwise, to keep formality with their deeds, they should have built Discord a temple in that place. Is there any reason that Concord should be a goddess and not Discord? or that (according to Labeo's division) she should not be a good goddess and Discord an evil one? He spoke upon grounds, because he saw that Fever had a temple built her, as well as Health. By the same reason should Discord have had one as well as Concord. Wherefore the Romans were not wise to live in the displeasure of so shrewd a goddess: they have forgotten that she was the destruction of Troy, by setting the three goddesses together by the ears for the golden apple because she was not bidden to their feast: whereupon the goddesses fell a scolding; Venus she got the apple, Paris, Helen, and Troy utter destruction. Wherefore if it were through her anger because she had no temple there with the rest, that she set the Romans at such variance, how much more angry would she be to see her chiefest enemy have a temple built in that place, where she had shown such absolute power? Now their greatest scholars do stomach us for deriding these vanities, and yet worshipping those promiscuous gods, they cannot for their lives clear themselves of this question of Concord and Discord, whether they let them alone unworshipped, and prefer Febris and Bellona before them (to whom their most ancient temples were dedicated), or that they do worship them both as well as the rest. Howsoever, they are in the briars, seeing that Concord got her gone, and left Discord to play havoc amongst them by herself.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of the diverse wars that followed after the building of Concord's temple.

Now they all thought that this new temple of Concord, and testimony of Gracchus, would be an excellent restraint unto all seditious spirits. But how far they shot wide, let the subsequent times give aim. For from that time forth, the pleaders never went about to avoid the examples of the Gracchi, but laboured to exceed them in their pretences. L. Saturninus, tribune, C. Cæsar Servillius, prætor, and not long after that, M. Drusus, all these began more bloody seditions, whence there arose not only civil slaughters, but at last they broke openly out into the Confederates' war, which brought all Italy unto most miserable and desperate extremities. Then followed the Slaves' war, and other civil wars, wherein it is strange to record what fields were pitched, what bloodshed and what murder stuck upon the face of all Italy, as far as the Romans had any power or seignory. And how small a company, less than seventy fencers, began this Slaves' war, which

mounted to that terror and danger. What multitudes of generals did this rascal crew overthrow? what numbers of Roman cities and provinces they destroyed, it is more than work enough for a professed historian to declare? For the war held out not only in Italy, but these slaves over-ran all Macedonia, Sicily, and the sea-coasts. And then what outrageous robberies at first, and what terrible wars afterwards were managed by the Pirates, what pen is sufficient to recapitulate them?

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of the civil wars between Sylla and Marius.

WHEN Marius being now imbrued with his countrymen's blood, and having slain many of his adversaries, was at length foiled and forced to fly the city, that now got time to take a little breath; presently (to use Tully's words) upon the sudden Cinna and Marius began to be conquerors again. And then out went the heart bloods of the most worthy men, and the lights of all the city. But soon after came Sylla, and revenged this barbarous massacre; but with what damage to the state and city, it is not my purpose to utter; for that this revenge was worse, than if all the offences that were punished, had been left unpunished. Let Lucan testify: in these words—

“Excessit medicina modum, nimiumque secuta est
Qua morbi duxêre manus: periêre nocentes
Sed cùm jam soli possent superesse nocentes
Tunc data libertas odiis resolutâque legum
Frenis ira ruit.”

‘The medicine wrought too sore, making the cure
Too cruel for the patient to endure:
The guilty fell: but none yet such remaining,
Hate riseth at full height, and wrath disdaining
Laws’ reins brake out.’

For in that war of Sylla and Marius (besides those that fell in the field), the whole city, streets, market-places, theatres, and temples were filled with dead bodies: that it was a question whether the conquerors slaughtered so many to attain the conquest, or because they had already attained it. In Marius’ first victory, at his return from exile, besides infinite other slaughters, Octavius’ head (the consul’s) was polled up in the pleading-place: Cæsar and Fimbra were slain in their houses, the two Crassi, father and son, killed in one another’s sight, Bebius and Numitorius trailed about upon hooks till death; Catullus poisoned himself to escape his enemies, and Menula, the jovial

Flamine, cut his own veins and so bled himself out of their danger, Marius having given order for the killing of all them whom he did not re-salute, or proffer his hand unto.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

How Sylla revenged Marius' murders.

Now as for Sylla's victory, the revenger of all this cruelty, it was not got without much store of citizens' blood, and yet the wars only having ended and not the grudges: this victory broke out into a far more cruel waste, in the midst of all this peace. For after the butcheries that the elder Marius had made (being yet but fresh and bleeding), there followed worse by the hands of the younger Marius and Carbo, both of the old faction of Marius. These two perceiving Sylla to come upon them, being desperate both of safety and victory, filled all with slaughters, both of themselves and others: for besides the massacre they made elsewhere in the city, they besieged the Senate in the very Court, and from thence as from a prison, dragged them out by the heads to execution. Mutius Scævola, the priest, was slain just as he had hold of the altar of Vesta, the most reverend relic of all the city, almost quenching that fire with his blood, which the virgins' care kept always burning. Then entered victorious Sylla into the city, and in the common street (war's cruelty now done, and peace's beginning) put seven thousand unarmed men to the sword, not in fight, but by an express command. And after that, he put even whom he list to death, throughout the whole city, insomuch that the slaughters grew so innumerable that one was glad to put Sylla in mind that he must either let some live, or else he should have none to be lord over. And then indeed this ravenous murderer began to be restrained by degrees; and a table was set up (with great applause) which proscribed but 2000 of the patriots and gentlemen, appointing them all to be presently killed. The number made all men sad, but the manner cheered them again: nor were they so sad, that so many should perish, as they rejoiced, that the rest should escape. Nevertheless, this cruel carelessness of theirs groaned at the exquisite torments, that some of the condemned persons suffered in their deaths. For one of them was torn in pieces by men's hands without touch of iron, where the executioners showed far more cruelty in rending this living man thus, than they use ordinarily upon a dead beast. Another having first his eyes plucked out, and then all the parts of his body cut away joint by joint, was forced to live, or rather to die, thus long in such intolerable torment. Many also of the noblest cities and towns were put unto the sack: and as one guilty man

is used to be led out to death, so was one whole city as then laid out and appointed for execution. These were the fruits of their peace after their wars, wherein they hasted not to get the conquest, but were swift to abuse it, being got. Thus this peace bandied in blood with that war, and quite exceeded it; for then war killed but the armed, but this peace never spared the naked. In the war he that was stricken, if he could, might strike again: but in this peace, he that escaped the war, must not live, but took his death with patience perforce.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A comparison of the Goths' corruptions, with the calamities that the Romans endured either by the Gauls, or by the authors of their civil wars.

WHAT barbarousness of other foreign nations, what cruelty of strangers, is comparable to this conquest of one of their citizens? What foe did Rome ever feel, more fatal, inhuman and outrageous? Whether in the irruptions first of the Gauls, and since of the Goths, or the inundations that Sylla, Marius, and other great Romans made with the blood of their own citizens, more horrible, or more detestable? The Gauls indeed killed the Senate, and spoiled all but the Capitol, that was defended against them. But they notwithstanding sold the besieged their freedom for gold, whereas they might have extorted it from them by famine, though not by force. But as for the Goths, they spared so many of the Senate, that it was a marvel that they killed any. But Sylla, when as Marius was yet alive, sat on the very Capitol (which the Gauls entered not), to behold from thence, the slaughters which he commanded to be performed. And Marius, being but fled, to return with more power and fury, he, keeping still in the Capitol, deprived numbers of their lives and states, colouring all this villainy by the degrees of the Senate. And when he was gone, what did the Marian faction respect or spare, when they would not forbear to kill old Scævola, a citizen, a senator, the chief priest, embracing that very altar, whereon they say the fate of Rome itself was adored? And for that last table of Sylla's (to omit the innumerable deaths besides), it cut the throats of more senators, than the Goths' whole army could find in their hearts but to offer, ransack, or spoil.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of the great and pernicious multitude of the Romans' wars a little before the coming of Christ.

WITH what face then, with what heart, with what impudence, folly, nay madness, do they impute these later calamities unto our Saviour, and yet will not impose the former upon their idols? Their civil discords by their own writers' confessions have been ever more extremely bloody than their foreign wars. The means which did not afflict, but utterly subvert: their State arose long before Christ, by the combination of these wicked causes arising from the war of Sylla and Marius, unto that of a Sertorius and Catiline, the one of whom, Sylla proscribed, and the other he nourished: and then downwards to the wars of Lepidus and Catullus, whereof the one would confirm Sylla's ordinances, and the other would disannul them: then to the war of Pompey and Cæsar: whereof Pompey was a follower of Sylla, and either equalled, or at least exceeded him in state and power; and Cæsar was one that could not bear the greatness of Pompey because he lacked it himself: which notwithstanding, after he had overthrown him and made him away, he went far beyond. From hence they come down to the other Cæsar, called Augustus, in whose reign our Saviour Christ was born. This Augustus had much civil wars, wherein were lost many excellent men, and Tully, that excellent commonwealth's man was one amongst the rest. For C. Cæsar, the conqueror of Pompey, though he used his victory with mercy, restoring the states and dignities to all his adversaries: notwithstanding all this, by a conspiracy of the noblest Senators he was stabbed to death in the court, for the defence of their liberty, who held him to affect a monarchy. After this Anthony (a man neither like him in means, nor manners, but given over to all sensuality) seemed to affect his power: whom Tully did stoutly withstand in defence of the said liberty. And then stepped up that younger Cæsar, the other Cæsar's adopted son, afterwards styled (as I said) Augustus: him did Tully favour and confirm against Anthony, hoping that he would be the man, who having demolished Anthony's pretences and powers, would re-erect the liberty of his country. But far mistaken was he and mole-eyed in this matter, for this young man whose power he had augmented, first of all suffered Anthony to cut off Cicero's head, as if it had been a bargain between them, and then brought that liberty which the other wrought so for, into his own sole command, and under his own particular subjection.

CHAPTER XXXI.

That those men that are not suffered as now to worship idols, do show themselves fools, in imputing their present miseries unto Christ, seeing that they endured the like when they did worship the devils.

BUT let them blame their own gods for such mischiefs, that will not thank our Saviour Christ for any of His benefits. For whensoever they befell them before their gods' altar steamed with Sabæan perfumes, and fresh flowers, their priests were gallant, their temple shone, plays, sacrifices and furies were all on foot amongst men. Yea, even when there was such an effusion of civil blood, that the altars of the very gods were besprinkled with it. Tully chose no temple for refuge, because he saw it availed not Scævola. But those that are now so ready with their saucy insultations against Christianity, of late either fled themselves into such places as were dedicated to Christ, or else were brought thither by the barbarians.

This I know, and every impartial judge may know as well as I, that if mankind had received Christianity before the African wars, to omit the other that I have rehearsed, and that is too long to rehearse, and withal that such a desolation should have happened, as fell upon Europe and Africa in the said wars; there is none of those infidels that oppose us now, but would have laid only the cause of it all upon the back of Christendom. But much more intolerable would their railings be, if that either the irruption of the Gauls, or the inundation of Tiber, and that great spoil by fire had immediately followed, upon the first preaching and receiving of Christian religion; but worst of all, if the civil wars, that exceeded all, had followed thereupon. And those evils which fell out so incredibly, so far beyond all belief, that the world reputed them as prodigies, had they come to pass in Christian times, who should have borne the blame thereof, but the Christians? for those things which were rather strange, than pernicious, as the speaking of the ox, the exclamations of children in their mothers' wombs, the flying of serpents, and the alteration of female creatures, both hens, and women into masculine forms, and such as these I willingly omit, those things are recorded in their histories, not in their fables, but be they true or false, they do not bring so much affliction unto man as admiration. But when it rained earth, and chalk, and stones (not congeries, that might be called hail, but direct stones), this verily might endamage the earth's inhabitants. In the said authors we read, that the fires of Etna broke out so far, that the sea boiled therewith, the rocks were burned, and the pitch dropped off the ships. This was no light hurt, but a large wounder. Again, Sicily was so overwhelmed

another time with the ashes thereof, that the houses of Catina were all turned over into the dust ; whereupon the Romans pitying their calamity, released them of that year's tribute. It is recorded also, that the number of the locusts in Africa was most wonderful, and prodigious, it being as then a province of the Romans : and that having consumed all the fruits and leaves of the trees, they fell all into the sea like a most huge and immeasurable cloud. And being dead, and cast upon the shore again, arose such a pestilence of their stink that thereof died eighty thousand men only in Massinissa's kingdom, and many more in other countries thereabouts, and of the thirty thousand Roman soldiers that remained at Utica, there were but only ten that survived. So that this foolery of theirs, which we must both endure and answer, what wrong would it not offer to the profession of the gospel, had it been preached before the birth of these prodigious accidents ? yet it will not call the meanest of their gods to account, for any of these misfortunes whatsoever, and yet these fools will worship them still in hope to be protected by them from these inconveniences, when they see nevertheless, how those that worshipped the same gods before have been oppressed, and overborne with the same burdens of calamity, nay with loads of miseries, far more ponderous and intolerable than ever these latter times produced.





THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

Of the contents of the First Book.

AT my first entrance upon this "Discourse of the City of God," I held it convenient, first of all, to stop their mouths, who in their extreme desire of only temporal bliss and greediness after worldly vanities, do make their exclaim upon Christianity (the true and only mean of salvation) whensoever it pleases God in His mercy to correct and admonish them (rather than in His justice, to punish them or afflict them) with any temporal inconvenience. And because the unlearned and vulgar sort of those persons are incited against us the more, by the endeavours and examples of those whom they hold learned, thinking (upon their assertions) that such calamities as have befallen them of late never befell in times past : and being confirmed in this error, by such as know it for an error, and yet dissemble their knowledge ; we thought it fit to show, how far this their opinion swerved from the truth, out of such books as their own authors have left unto posterity, for the better understanding of the estates of precedent ages : and to make it plain and apparent, that those imaginary gods, which they either did worship as then in public, or as now in secret, are nothing but most foul, unclean spirits, and most deceitful and malignant devils : so that their only delight was to have most bestial and abominable practices, either published as their true exploits, or feigned of them by poetical inventions ; these they commanded to be publicly presented in plays and at solemn feasts : to the end, that man's infirmity presuming upon these patterns, as upon divine authorities, might never be withdrawn from acting the like wickedness. This we confirmed, not by mere conjectures, but partly by what of late times our self hath beheld in the celebration exhibited unto such gods : and partly by their own writings, that left those reports recorded, not as in disgrace, but as in the honour

of the gods : so that Varro (a man of the greatest learning and authority amongst them of any writing of divinity and humanity, and giving each object his proper attribute according to the worth and due respect thereof) sticketh not to affirm, that those stage-plays are not matters of human invention, but merely divine things, whereas if the city were quit of all but honest men, stage-players should have no room in mere humanity. Nor did Varro affirm this of himself, but set it down as he had seen the use of these plays in Rome, being there born and brought up.

CHAPTER II.

The contents of the Second and Third Books.

AND having propounded a method of our discourse in the end of the First Book, whereof we have prosecuted some parcels in the books following, now we know that we are to proceed in these things, which our order obliges us to relate. We promised therefore to say somewhat against those that impute the Romans' calamities unto Christianity; and to make a peculiar relation of the evils that we should find their city, or the provinces thereof, to have endured ere their sacrifices were prohibited : all which questionless they would have blamed us for, had they befallen them in the times of our religious lustre and authority : this we performed sufficiently (I think) in the two last books, in the former of them, reciting the evils which were either the only ones, or the sorest and most extreme ; I mean those corruptions of manners : in this last, of those which these fools have so main a fear to suffer, as afflictions of body and goods, which the best men oftentimes partake of, as well as the worst. But for the things that make them evil, and deprave their souls, those they detain, with more than patience, with extremity of desire. Then I touched a little at the city, and so came down speedily to Augustus. But if I would have dilated (not upon these reciprocal hurts, that one man doth to another, as was desolations, etc., but) upon the things that befall them by the very elements, and from nature, which Apuleius briefly speaks of in one place of his book "*De Mundo*," saying : that all earthly things have their changes, revolutions, and dissolutions ; for (he saith) that by an exceeding earthquake, the ground opened at a certain time, and swallowed up whole cities, and all that were in them ; showers and inundations overwhelmed whole countries ; continents were cut into the main by strange tides, and made islands ; and the sea elsewhere cast up large grounds and left them bare ; storms and tempests overturned whole cities ; lightning consumed many of the Eastern countries, and deluges as many of the West. Fire sprang from the cauldrons of Etna, as from a torrent, and ran

down the hills : if I should have collected all of this kind that I could, which happened long before that the name of Christ beat down those ruins of salvation, what end should I ever make? I promised also to make demonstration of the Romans' conditions, and why the true God did vouchsafe them that increase of their empire, even He, in whose hand are all kingdoms, when their own puppetries never did them a pennyworth of good, but cozened them in all that ever they could. Now then am I to discourse of their cozenage, but chiefly of the empire's increase. For, as for their devil's deceits, the Second Book opened them reasonable fully. And in all the three books past, as occasion served, we noted how much aid and comfort the great God did vouchsafe both the good and bad, in these afflictions of war, only by the name of Christ, which the barbarians so highly revered, beyond all use and custom of hostility. Even He did this, that "maketh the sun to shine both upon good and bad, raineth both upon the just and the unjust."¹

CHAPTER III.

Whether happy and wise men should account it as part of their felicity to possess an empire that is enlarged by no means but war.

Now then let us examine the nature of this spaciousness, and continuance of empire, which these men give their gods such great thanks for ; to whom also they say they exhibited those plays (that were so filthy both in actors and the action) without any offence of honesty. But first, I would make a little inquiry, seeing you cannot show such estates to be anyway happy, as are in continual wars, being still in terror, trouble, and guilt of shedding human blood, though it be their foes ; what reason then, or what wisdom shall any man show in glorying in the largeness of empire, all their joy being but as a glass, bright and brittle, and evermore in fear and danger of breaking? To dive the deeper into this matter, let us not give the sails of our souls to every air of human breath, nor suffer our understanding's eye to be smoked up with the fumes of vain words, concerning kingdoms, provinces, nations, or so. No, let us take two men (for every particular man is a part of the greatest city and kingdom of the world, as a letter is a part of a word), and of these two men, let us imagine the one to be poor, or but of a mean estate, the other potent and wealthy ; but withal, let my wealthy man take with him fears, sorrows, covetousness, suspicion, disquiet, contentions, let these be the hooks for him to hale in the augmentation of his estate, and with all the increase of those cares, together with his estate ; and let my poor man take with him, sufficiency with little, love

¹ Matt. v.

of kindred, neighbours, friends, joyous peace, peaceful religion, soundness of body, sincereness of heart, abstinence of diet, chastity of carriage, and security of conscience. Where should a man find anyone so sottish, as would make a doubt which of these to prefer in his choice? Well then, even as we have done with these two men, so let us do with two families, two nations, or two kingdoms. Lay them both to the line of equity; which done, and duly considered, when it is done, here doth vanity lie bare to the view, and there shines felicity. Wherefore it is more convenient, that such as fear and follow the law of the true God, should have the swaying of such empires; not so much for themselves, as for those over whom they are emperors. For themselves, their piety, and their honesty (God's admired gifts) will suffice them, both to the enjoying of true felicity in this life, and the attaining of that eternal and true felicity in the next. So that here upon earth, the rule and regality that is given to the good man, does not return him so much good, as it does to those that are under this his rule and regality. But contrariwise, the government of the wicked, harms themselves far more than their subjects, for it gives themselves the greater liberty to exercise their lusts; but for their subjects, they have none but their own iniquities to answer for; for what injury soever the unrighteous master does to the righteous servant, it is no scourge for his guilt, but a trial of his virtue. And therefore he that is good is free, though he be a slave, and he that is evil, a slave though he be a king. Nor is he slave to one man, but that which is worst of all, unto as many masters as he affects vices; according to the Scripture, speaking thus hereof: "Of whatsoever a man is overcome, to that he is in bondage."¹

CHAPTER IV.

Kingdoms without justice, how like they are unto thievish purchases.

SET justice aside then, and what are kingdoms but fair thievish purchases? because what are thieves' purchases but little kingdoms? for in thefts, the hands of the underlings are directed by the commander, the confederacy of them is sworn together, and the pillage is shared by the law amongst them. And if those raggamuffins grow but up to be able enough to keep forts, build habitations, possess cities, and conquer adjoining nations, then their government is no more called thievish, but graced with the eminent name of a kingdom, given and gotten, not because they have left their practices, but because that now they may use them without danger of law: for elegant and excellent was that pirate's answer to the great Macedonian Alexander, who had taken

¹ 2 Peter ii. 19.

him; the king asking him how he durst molest the seas so, he replied with a free spirit, "How darest thou molest the whole world? But because I do it with a little ship only, I am called a thief; thou doing it with a great navy, art called an emperor."

CHAPTER V.

Of those fugitive sword-players, whose power grew parallel with a regal dignity.

I WILL therefore omit to review the crew that Romulus called together, by proclaiming freedom from fear of punishment to all such as would inhabit Rome; hereby both augmenting his city, and getting a sort of fellows about him that were fit for any villainous or desperate act whatsoever. But this I say, that the very empire of Rome, albeit was now grown so great and so powerful by subduing so many nations, and so become sole terror of all the rest, was nevertheless extremely daunted, and driven into a terrible fear of an invasion very hardly to be avoided, by a small crew of rascally sword-players, that had fled from the fence school into Campania, and were now grown to such a mighty army, that under the conduct of three captains they had made a most lamentable and cruel waste and spoil of the most part of the country. Let them tell me now, what god it was that raised up these men from a few poor contemptible thieves, to a government so terrible to the state and strength of Rome itself: will it be answered that they had no help at all from the gods, because they continued but a while? As though that every man's life must of necessity be of long continuance: why then the gods help no king to his kingdom, because that most kings die very soon: nor is that to be accounted as a benefit which every man loseth in so little a time, and which vanishes (like a vapour) so soon after it is given: for what is it unto them that worshipped these gods under Romulus, and are now dead, though the Roman empire be never so much increased since, seeing they are now pleading their own particular causes in hell: of what kind, and in what fashion they are there, belongs not to this place to dispute. And this may be understood likewise of all that have ended their lives in a few years, and bear the burdens of their deeds with them, howsoever their empire be afterwards augmented, and continued through the lives and deaths of many successors. But if this be not so, but that those benefits (though of so short space) be to be ascribed to the gods' goodness, then assuredly the sword-players had much to thank them for, who by their help did cast off their bonds of slavery, and fled and escaped, and got an army of that strength and good discipline together, that Rome itself began to

be terribly afraid of them, and lost diverse fields against them. They got the upper hand of diverse generals, they used what pleasures they would; they did even what they lusted; and until their last overthrow, which was given them with extreme difficulty, they lived in all pomp and regality. But now unto matter of more consequence.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the covetousness of Ninus, who made the first war upon his neighbours, through the greedy desire he had to increase his kingdom.

JUSTIN, that wrote the Greek (or rather universal) history after Troguſ Pompeyus, not only in Latin (for so did he), but in a more succinct manner, begins his book thus. "The sway and rule of nations at the first was in the hands of kings, who got their heights of majesty, not by popular ambition, but by their own moderate carriage, approved by good men. The people had no law but the king's will. Their care and custom was the keeping, not the augmenting of their dominion's limits. Every man's kingdom was bounded within his own country. Ninus of Assyria was the first that followed the lust of sovereignty in breaking the old hereditary law of nations. He first warred on the adjoining countries, subduing the people (as yet unacquainted with arts military) as far as Lybia." And a little after: "Ninus confirmed his conquest by continuing possession of it. And having subdued the neighbouring nations, from them he levied stronger powers, and set farther footing into the world, until by making one victory the continual means of another, he had made an entire conquest of all the East." How truly soever he or Troguſ wrote this (for I have found them both elsewhere erroneous by true proofs): yet it is certain by the record of other writers, that Ninus enlarged the Assyrian's monarchy exceedingly: and that it continued longer than the Romans' hath done as yet. For as the chroniclers do deliver up account, it was one thousand two hundred and forty years after Ninus' reign, to the translation of this monarchy to the Medians. Now to war against one's neighbours, and to proceed to the hurt of such as hurts not you, for greedy desire of rule and sovereignty, what is this but flat thievery in a greater excess and quantity than ordinary?

CHAPTER VII.

Whether the pagan gods have any power either to further or hinder the progress, increase, or defects of earthly kingdoms.

IF this kingdom continued so long, and so spacious, without the assistance of any of those gods, why are they reputed as the enlargers and preservers of Rome's monarchy? There is the like reason for both. But if Assyria were bound to thank the gods, I demand which gods? for the nations that Ninus conquered had none. And if the Assyrians had any peculiar ones, that were better state-wrights, what, were they dead then when the monarchy was translated to the Medes? Or were they unpaid, or had the Medians promised them better wages, that they would needs thither and from them again into Persia at the invitation of Cyrus, as promising them somewhat that better liked them? The Persians ever since a little after the short (though spacious) monarchy of Alexander the Great, confirmed their estate in that large country of the east, and are a kingdom at this day. If this be so, then either the gods have no faith, in that they keep this flitting from the friend to the foe (which Camillus would not do, though Rome were most unthankful to him for his most available conquest of the Veii, but burying the wrong, freed it the second time from the Gauls). Or else they are not so valiant as gods should be: but may be conquered and chased away by human strength and cunning. Or when they do fight, it is the gods on the one side that beat the gods on the other, and not the men. Oh then, belike they are foes amongst themselves as well as human creatures. Good: the city should never give them any more worship than it held to be due to any other people or nation whatsoever that helpeth them. But howsoever this flight, or this removal, or this killing of these gods fell out, the name of Christ was not yet known in those times and places, when and wherein these changes of states did thus follow the effects of war. For if that after those twelve hundred years, and the overplus, when the Assyrian monarchy was removed, Christian religion had come in, and preached of another, an eternal monarchy, and condemned all their gods for false and feigned, and their sacrifices for sacrilegious fooleries. What would the vain men of that nation have replied, but that the kingdom was overthrown because they had left their old religion, and received this of ours? In which foolish answer, let these our later antagonists behold themselves as in a glass: and blush (if they be not past grace) to follow so fond a precedent. Though indeed the Roman empire be rather afflicted than altered or translated, as it was often before Christ's coming: and as it recovered from those afflictions before, so may it from these, there is no cause of despair. Who knows the will of God herein?

CHAPTER VIII.

What precious gods those were by whose power the Romans held their empire to be enlarged and preserved, seeing that they durst not trust them with the defence of mean and particular matters.

LET us now make inquiry, if you will, which god (or gods) of all this swarm that Rome worshipped, was it that did enlarge and protect this their empire. In a world of such worth and dignity, they durst not secretly commit any dealing to the goddess Cloacina, nor to the goddess Volupia, the lady of pleasure, nor to Libentina, the goddess of lust, nor to Vaticanus, the god of children's crying, nor to Cunina, the goddess of their cradles. But how can this one little book possibly have room to contain the names of all their gods and goddesses, when as their great volumes will not do it, seeing they have a several god to see to every particular act they take in hand? Durst they trust one god with their lands, think you? No, Rusina must look to the country, Jugatinus to the hill tops: Collatina to the whole hills besides, and Vallonia to the valleys. Nor could Segetia alone be sufficient to protect the corn: but while it was in the ground, Seia must look to it: when it was up, and ready to mow, Segetia: when it was mown and laid up, then Tutilina took charge of it, who did not like that Segetia alone should have charge of it all the while before it came dried unto her hand: nor was it sufficient for those wretches, that their poor seduced souls, that scorned to embrace one true God, should become prostitute unto this meaner multitude of devils, they must have more: so they made Proserpina goddess of the corn's first leaves, and buds: the knots Nodotus looked unto: Volutina to the blades, and when the ear began to look out, it was Patelena's charge: when the ear began to be even bearded (because Hostire was taken of old for *to make even*) Hostilina's work came in; when the flowers bloomed, Flora was called forth: when they grew white, Lacturtia; being ripe Matuca, being cut down Runcina. O let them pass, that which they shame not at, I loath at. These few I have reckoned, to show that they durst at no hand affirm, that these gods were the ordainers, adorners, augmenters or preservers of the empire of Rome, having each one such peculiar charges assigned them, as they had no leisure in the world to deal in any other matter. How should Segetia guard the empire, that must not meddle but with the corn? or Cunina look to the wars, that must deal with nought but children's cradles? or Nodotus give his aid in the battle, that cannot help so much as the blade of the corn, but is bound to look to the knot only? Every house hath a porter to the door: and though he be but a single man, yet he is sufficient for that office: but they must have

their three gods, Forculus for the door, Cardea for the hinge, and Limentius for the threshold. Belike Forculus could not possibly keep both door, hinges, and threshold.

CHAPTER IX.

Whether it was Jove, whom the Romans held the chief god, that was this protector and enlarger of their empire.

WHEREFORE setting aside this nest of inferior gods (for a while), let us look into the offices of the greater; and which of them brought Rome to such a pre-eminence over the other nations. This same surely was Jove's work. For, him they made the king over all their gods besides, as his sceptre, and his seat on the highest part of all the Capitol do sufficiently testify. And of him, they have a very convenient saying (though it be from a poet), "All is full of Jove." And Varro is of opinion, that those that worship but one God, and that without any statue, do mean this Jove, though they call him by another name. Which being so, why is he so evil used at Rome, and by others also in other places, as to have a statue made him? This evil use so disliked Varro, that although he were overborne with the custom of so great a city, yet he doubted not both to affirm, and record, that in making those statues, they both banished all fear, and brought in much error?

CHAPTER X.

What opinion they followed, that set diverse gods to rule in diverse parts of the world.

BUT why had he Juno added to him, both as his sister and wife? because we place Jupiter in the sky (say they) and Juno in the air, and these two are contigual, one immediately next above the other. Very well, then all is not full of Jove as you said but now, if Juno do fill a part. Does the one fill the other (being man and wife), and are they distinct in their several elements, and yet conjoined in them both? why then hath Jove the sky assigned him and Juno the air? Again, if only these two sufficed for all, what should Neptune do with the sea, and Pluto with the earth? Nay, and for fear of want of broods, Neptune must have a Salacia, and Pluto a Proserpina for wives to breed upon. For as Juno possesses the heavens, in most part the air (say they): so does Salacia the inner parts of the sea, and Proserpina the bowels of the earth. Alas good men, they would fain stitch up their lies hand-

somely, and cannot find which way. For if this were true, the world should have but three elements (and not four as their ancient writers have recorded), if every couple of gods should have their element. But they themselves have there affirmed, that the sky is one thing and the air another. But the water, within and without is all but water (there may be some diversity to the diet, but never any alteration of the essential form): and earth is earth, how ever it be severally qualified. Now the world being complete in these four, where is Minerva's share? she has a share in the Capitol though she be not daughter to Jove and Juno both. If she dwell in the highest part of the sky, and that therefore the poets feigned her to be the birth of Jove's own brain, why is not she then made the absolute empress of heaven, seeing that she sits above Jove? Because it is not meet to make the child lord over the parent? why then was not that equity kept between Saturn and Jupiter? because Saturn was conquered? why then belike they fought! no, the gods forbid, say they; that is but a poetical fiction, a fable: well, thus you see they will trust no fables, they do think better of their gods than so, but how chances it then that Saturn (seeing he might not sit above his son Jove) had not a seat equal with him? Because Saturn (say they) is nothing but the "length of time;" well then, they that worship Saturn, worship Time and Jove, the king of all the gods is said to be born of Time, and what wrong do we to Jove and Juno in saying they are born of Time, seeing that by the Pagans' own confessions they signify heaven and earth, both which were created in time, for this the greatest scholars and wisest of them all commend to our memory, nor did Virgil speak out of fiction, but out of Philosophy, when he said—

"Tum pater omnipotens fœcundis imbribus Æther
Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit."

'Almighty Æther in a fattening shower,
Dropped in the lap of his glad spouse.'

That was, the earth. In which they make a difference also, for herein Terra, and Tellus and Tellumon are all several things, they say. And all these they have as gods, distinct in name, office, and ceremonial rites. Terra is also called the mother of the gods besides, that the poets may now feign with far more toleration, seeing that their very books of religion affirm, that Juno is not only wife and sister but mother also unto Jove. The same earth they style both Ceres and Vesta, yet Vesta they say most commonly is "the fire," and guards that which the city cannot want? And therefore the virgins kept it, because fire and virginity do never bring forth anything. All which vanity, it was fit he only should abolish that was born of a virgin. But who can endure to hear them ascribe so much honour and chastity to the fire, and yet

not shame to call Vesta, Venus, that her virgins might have the less care of the honour of virginity, for if Venus were Vesta how should the virgins do her good service in abstaining from venery? or are there two Venuses, the one a virgin, the other a wanton? or three rather, one of the virgins, Vesta one of the wives, and one of the whores, to such an one as this last is, the Phœnicians consecrated the prostitution of their daughters, before that they married them: now which of these is Vulcan's wife? not the virgin, she never had husband, not the whore, oh no, not Juno's son, and Minerva's forger, be wronged. Well then, it was Venus the wife: yet we would have her to stand as a pattern to be imitated for her tricks that she played with Mars, oh now (say they) you run to the fables again, why what reason is there that you should grieve to hear those things at our tongues, and yet applaud them on your own stages? why does it vex you that we should say (a thing utterly incredible, but that it is so fully proved) that those foul and open crimes of their gods instituted and celebrated in their public honours, and by their own commands.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the multitude of gods which the Pagan doctors avouch to be but one and the same Jupiter.

WHEREFORE let them flourish with their physics as long as they like. Let Jupiter be one while the soul of this terrene world, filling the whole fabric of the four elements, more or less, as they please; and another while but a quarter-ruler with his brethren and sisters: let him be the sky now, embracing Juno, which is the air under him, and let him by and by be sky and air both, filling the lap of the earth, his wife and mother, with fertile showers and seeds; this is no absurdity in their divinity; and (to omit the long and tedious catalogue of his removes and strange transmutations) let him forthwith be but one, and that only god, of whom the famous poet was thought to say—

—“Deumque, namque, ire per omnes,
Terrasque, tractusque, maris cœlumque, profundum.”

— ‘For God His spirit imparts,
To the earth's, the sea's, and heaven's profoundest parts.’

Let him be Jupiter in the sky, Juno in the air, Neptune in the sea, Salacia in the sea's depth, Pluto in the earth, Proserpina in the earth's lowest part, Vesta in the household's fire, Vulcan in the smith's shop, Sol, Luna and the stars in the spheres, Apollo in divination, Mercury in traffic, in Janus the porter, in the bounds Terminus, in time Saturn, in

war Mars and Bellona, in the vineyards, Bacchus, in the corn, Ceres, in the woods, Diana, in men's wits, Minerva, let him rule the seed of man as Liber, and of women, as Libera, as he is father of the day, let him be Diespiter, as ruler of the monthly disease of women, let him be the goddess Mena: and Lucina that helps in their child-birth. And helping the fruits which increase, let him take the name of Ops. Let him be Vaticanus, that opens the child's mouth first to cry, and Levana, that takes up from the mother: and Cunina, that guards the cradle. Let none but him sing the destinies of the new-born child, and be called Carmentes, let him sway chance, and be styled Fortune, or women's dugs, and be called Rumina (because the ancients called a dug Ruma), let him be Potina and suckle the hog-babes: or Educa and feed them: or Paventia, for frightening them, or Venilia for sudden hope: Volupia for pleasure, Agenoria for action, Stimula for provocation, Strenua for confirming man's courage, Numeria for teaching children to tell twenty, and Camæna for singing. Nay let us make him Consus, for his counsel, Sentia for his sententious inspirations, Juventas for the guiding of our egress from youth to fuller age. For our chin's sake (which, if he love us, he clothes in hair) let him be Fortuna Barbata: nay free, because he is a male-god, let him either be Barbatus, as Nodotus is, or because he has a beard, let him not be Fortuna, but Fortunius. Well, on, let him be Jugatine, to look to the hills, and at the losing of a virgin's nuptial girdle let him be invoked by the name of Virginensis: let him be Mutinus: which amongst the Greeks was Priapus, but that (it may be) he will be ashamed of. Let Jupiter alone be all these that I have reckoned, and that I have not reckoned (for I have thought fit to omit a great many), or as those hold, which make him the soul of the world (many of whom are learned men), let all these be but as parts and virtues of him. If it be so, as I do not yet inquire how it is, what should they lose if they took a shorter course, and adore but one God? what one thing belonging unto His power were despised, if Himself entirely were duly worshipped? If they fear that some of his parts would be angry for being neglected, why then it is not as they say, that all this is but as the life of one soul, containing all those gods as the parts, powers, virtues, and faculties thereof: but every part hath a life, really and distinctly separate from the other: this must needs be true, if one of them may be offended, and another be pleased, and both with one act. And to say that whole Jove would be offended, if all his parts were not severally worshipped, this were foolish? for there were not one of them left out, if the person were adored in whom they are all jointly included. For to permit the rest (being innumerable), whereas they say that the stars are all and every one real parts of Jove, and live, have reasonable souls, and therefore are absolute gods; they say they know not what, and see not how many of them they leave without altars and without

worship, both which notwithstanding they have exhibited themselves and commanded others to exhibit unto a certain small number of them : wherefore if they doubt the anger of the rest, why are not they afraid to live in the displeasure of the most part of heaven, having given content but unto so few ? Now if they worshipped all the stars inclusively in Jupiter's particular person, they might satisfy them all by this means in the adoration of him alone : for so, none of them would think much, seeing they all were worshipped in him ; nor should any have cause to think they were contemned : whereas otherwise the greater part may conceive just anger for being thus omitted by those that give all the honour unto a very few ; and their anger may well be the greater in that they shine above as unregarded, and behold filthy Priapus stand naked below, in great respect and credit.

CHAPTER XII.

Of their opinion that held God to be the soul, and the world to be the body.

WHAT of this ? Ought not this to move the sharpest wits, nay, all in general ? For indeed there is no great sharpness of wit required to the laying aside of all wrangling, and to attend but whether God be the world's soul or no, and whether the world's body or no, both making one creature, whether He be nature's storehouse containing all things in Himself ? whether that out of His soul, that animates all this whole mass, the lives and beings of all living creatures be taken or no, each one according to their natures ? and whether that there be nothing on earth which is not part of God ? If this were true, mark but the irreligious consequence thereof : a man, if it were so, should not tread, but still he treads part of God under his feet ; and in every creature that he killed, he should kill a part of the Deity. I will not relate what others may think upon. I cannot speak it without exceeding shame.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of such as hold that the reasonable creatures only are parts of the divine essence.

If they say indeed, that all things in the whole world do not participate offence with God, but yet all reasonable creatures do truly, I cannot see how that can stand. Then all the world is not God ; for otherwise how can they keep brute beasts from being part of Him ? But what needs all this ? Let us go but unto this reasonable creature, man ; can there be

a more damnable absurdity, than to believe that part of God's essence is beaten, when an unoffending child is beaten? To make the subsistence of almighty God, be so lascivious, unjust, wicked, and damnable, as diverse men are : what man can endure to hear it but he that is absolutely mad : lastly, how can God be justly angry with those that do not worship Him, when as they are parts of His own self that are guilty? So then, they are forced to say that every particular god hath his life and subsistence by himself, and that they are not pieces of one another, but each one that is particularly known, must have his peculiar worship : that is known I say, because they cannot all be known. Over all whom, Jupiter being king, thence it comes (as I imagine) that they believe him to be the sole erecter and protector of Rome's monarchy. For if it were not he that did it, whom should they think able to perform so great a work? each one having his peculiar task already so distinctly assigned, that one must by no means meddle with that which was under the charge of another. So then the conclusion is, it must needs be only the king of gods, that erected and preserved this kingdom of men.

CHAPTER XIV.

That the augmentations of kingdoms are unfitly ascribed to Jove. Victory (whom they call a goddess) being sufficient of herself to give a full despatch to all such businesses.

Now here is a question ; why may not sovereignty itself be a god? What should hinder it more than hinders Victory? Or what need men trouble Jove, if Victory be but favourable enough, and will stay with such as she means to make conquerors? If she be but propitious, let Jove mind his own business, the nation's shall come under. Yea, but it may be they are good men and loth to wrong their neighbours that wrong not them, or to provoke them to war, without a juster cause than mere desire to enlarge their kingdom. Nay, be they of that mind, I commend them with all mine heart.

CHAPTER XV.

Whether an honest man ought to entertain any desire to enlarge his empire.

WHEREFORE let them observe, whether it befit a good and upright man to rejoice in the enlarging of his dominions. For it was the badness of those against whom just wars were whilom undertaken, that hath advanced earthly sovereignties to that port they now hold : which would

have been little still, if no enemy had given cause nor provocation to war by offering his neighbour wrong. If men had always been thus conditioned, the kingdoms of the earth would have continued little in quantity, and peaceful in neighbourly agreement. And then a many kingdoms would have been in the world, as a many families are now in a city. So that the waging war, and the augmentation of dominions by conquest may seem to the bad as a great felicity, but the good must needs hold it a mere necessity. But because it would be worse if the bad should get all the sovereignty, and so overrule the good, therefore in that respect, the honest men may esteem their own sovereignty a felicity. But doubtless, he is far more happy that has a good neighbour by him in quiet, than he that must be forced to subdue an evil neighbour by contention. It is an evil wish, to wish for one that thou hatest, or fearest, or for one to trouble thee that thou mightest have one to conquer. Wherefore if the Romans attained to so great an empire by honest, upright, and just wars, why should they not reverence their enemy's iniquity, and take it for their goddess' good? For we see that iniquity hath given good assistance to the increase of this empire by setting on others upon unjust provocation to just war, that so the Romans might have just cause to subdue them, and so consequently to enlarge their own dominions. And why should not iniquity be a goddess (at least among foreign nations) as well as Fear and Paleness and Fever was at Rome? So that by these two deities, Iniquity and Victory, the first beginning the wars, and the latter ending them with the conquest, Rome's empire was enlarged infinitely, whilst Jove kept holiday in the Capitol. For what hath Jupiter to do here where those (which they may say are but merely his benefits) are worshipped, invoked, and accounted for direct deities and parts of his essence? Indeed he should have had a fair good hand in this business, if that he were called Sovereignty as well as she is called Victory. But if that Sovereignty be but a mere gift of Jove's, then why may not Victory be so too? Both would be held to be so if the Romans did not worship a dead stone in the Capitol, but the true King of kings and Lord of all domination both in earth and heaven.

CHAPTER XVI.

The reason why the Romans, in their appointments of several gods for every thing and every action, would needs place the Temple of Rest or Quiet without the gates.

BUT I wonder much that the Romans, appointing particular gods over everything, and almost every motion, Agenoria, that stirred men to

action ; Stimula, that forced them forward ; Murcia, that never went out of her pace, and, as Pomponius says, made men slothful, and disabled them from action ; Strenua, that made men resolute : unto all which gods and goddesses they offered public sacrifices, and kept solemn feasts ; being to dispose of Quiet, the goddess of Rest, her they only vouchsafed a temple without Port Collina, but allowed her no public honours at all in the city. Whether was this a sign of their unquiet and turbulent spirits, or those who had such a rabble of devil-gods. No worship and reverence, should ever come to enjoy that Rest, whereunto the true Physician invites us, saying : " Learn of Me that I am meek, and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls." ¹

CHAPTER XVII.

Whether if Jove, being the chief god of all, Victory be to be accounted as one of the number.

WILL they say (think you) that Jupiter sends this goddess Victory, whether she pleases, and she obeying him, sets up her rest on that side that he commands ? It is true indeed : but not of that Jove which their fondness dreams is king of the gods ; but of Him that is the true King of all times and all things, that can send (not victory, which is no substance, but) His angels, and make them conquer whom He pleases ; whose counsels may be unknown, but never unjust. For if Victory be a goddess, why is not Triumph a god and husband unto her, or her brother, or son, or somewhat ? For they believe such absurdities of the gods, as if the Poets should but feign, or we but cast them in the teeth with, they would presently answer, it were a ridiculous figment, not to be attributed to the true gods : and yet they laugh not at themselves, who did more than read those dotages in the Poets, when they adored them in their temples. Wherefore they should worship and adore only Jupiter indeed, and let all this multitude pass. For if Victory be a goddess and subject unto that king, she dares not resist him, but must be ready to fulfil his pleasure whithersoever he send her.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Why Fortune and Felicity were made goddesses.

NAY Felicity is a goddess also now : she has got her an altar, a temple, sacrifices, and everything fit : why should not she have all the worship

¹ Matt. xi. 29.

to herself? Wheresoever she is, there should all good be. But why is Fortune preferred to the honour of a deity? Is Felicity one thing and Fortune another? Yes, Fortune may be both good and bad, but if Felicity once grow bad, she loses her name. Truly I think we should have all the gods, of both sexes (if they have sexes), to be still good ones: and so thought Plato and divers other excellent philosophers and statesmen. How then can the goddess Fortune be now good and now evil? Is she no goddess when she is not good, but is turned immediately into a devil? Why then how many goddesses are there? Even as many as there be fortunate men, that is good fortunes. For many bad fortunes and many good, that is, at one time falling together; Fortune should be both good and evil at once, if she be all these: good to these and bad to the other. But she that is the goddess is always good: well, suppose, is she Felicity herself: why changes she her name then? Yes, that may be tolerated. For many things have two or three names. But why then hath she divers temples, altars, and ceremonies? Because (say they) that is Felicity that does follow a man's deserts: that good fortune which lights casually upon good and evil, without any respect of deserts: and is therefore called Fortune. How can she then be good, coming with no discretion as well to evil men as good? And why is she adored, being so blind that she commonly over-runs those that honour her, and stays with those that scorn her? If her servants obtain grace at her hands, and get her to stay with them, then she follows merits, and is Fortune no more. Where is her definition then? How then doth all go by chance? If she be Fortune, in vain is all her worship: but if she discern, and help her servants, then she is Fortune no more. But does not Jupiter send her also whither his pleasure is? Well if he do, then let him have all the worship to himself: for she cannot gainsay him, if he bid her depart to such or such a man. Or it may be that the evil do honour her, to get themselves some merit whereby they may purchase Felicity, and so enjoy her company instead of Fortune's.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of a goddess called Fortuna Muliebris.

NAY, they are in such dotage upon this same Fortune, that they do steadfastly affirm that the image which the matrons dedicated and named "Fortuna Muliebris, the woman's fortune," did speak particular words; and that not once but often, saying that they had dedicated her in a very good order and respect: which if it were true, we ought not to wonder at. For the devils can use this cozenage with ease; which

was the more discoverable, in that it was she that spoke, who follows chance, and not desert. Fortune spoke, but Felicity was silent: unto what other end was this, but only to make men neglect living well, seeing that without any desert this Lady Fortune might make them fortunate? But yet if Fortune did speak, the *man's fortune* (methinks) should have spoken, and not the *woman's*, because otherwise, the women that consecrated the statue might be thought to feign that the image spoke, because they love so well to be heard speak themselves.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the deification of Virtue and Faith by the Pagans, and of their omission of the worship that was due to divers other gods, if it be true that these were gods.

THEY made a goddess also of Virtue: which if she were such, should take place of a great many of the rest. But being no goddess, but a gift of God, let it be obtained of Him that alone has power of the gift of it, and farewell all the buried roll of these counterfeit gods. But why is Faith made a goddess, and graced with a temple and an altar? Whosoever knows faith well, makes his own bosom her temple. But how know they what faith is, when her chief office is to believe in the true God? And why may not Virtue suffice? is not Faith there where Virtue is? They divide Virtue but into four parts, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance; and because every one of these has several sub-divisions, therefore falls Faith to be a part of Justice, and is of chief power with us, that know that the "just shall live by faith."¹ But I wonder of these men that do so thirst after store of gods, that having made Faith a goddess, they will so neglect a great many goddesses more of her nature, to whom they should afford temples and altars as well as to her? Why is not Temperance made a goddess, having given such lustre to divers Roman princes? Nor Fortitude that held Scævola's hand in the fire; and went with Curtius into the spacious gulf for the love of his country: and stood by the two Decii, the father and the son, when they vowed their lives to their nation? If, by the way, this were true valour in them, as it is a question (but not disputable here), why are not Prudence and Wisdom made deities as well as the rest? Because they are all worshipped under the general name of Virtue. So might all the supposed parts of one God be entirely worshipped in His sole and particular worship. But in Virtue, there is Faith, and Chastity, as parts indeed, and yet those must have peculiar altars and sacrifices. But it is vanity and not verity that turns such qualities into deities.

¹ Hab. 2.

CHAPTER XXI.

That such as knew not the true and only God had better have been contented with Virtue and Felicity.

FOR these are the gifts of God, not gods themselves. But where Virtue and Felicity is, what needeth any more? What will satisfy him whom these two cannot satisfy? Virtue confineth all good acts, and Felicity all good desires. If it were for these that Jupiter was worshipped (and what is the extent and continuance of dominion, but an appurtenance of felicity) why perceived they not that these were but his gifts, and not deities themselves? But if they were deities, what needs any beside them? For let them cast over all the sum of their gods and goddesses' functions, as their inventions have distributed them, and find if they can, that he that has virtue and felicity, needs any of their helps, or has any use of them? What need he trouble Mercury or Minervâ for learning virtue, including it all in herself? For virtue is but *an art of living well and justly*, as all the old writers do define it. And therefore some say that the word art comes of ἀρετή in Greek, which is virtue. But if none but witty men could be virtuous, what use then is there of Father Catus, a god that maketh men acute, when as Felicity can do all this? For to be born witty, is a felicity. Wherefore, though the child being yet unborn could not merit this felicity; yet she bestows wit upon the child as a benefit unto the parents that honoured her. But what need the women in travail call on Lucina, Felicity being able with her presence both to make their labour easy, and their offspring happy? What need Ops be troubled with the children when they are new born, Vaticanus when they cry? Cunina when they sleep, Rumina when they suck, Statilius when they learn to stand, Adeona and Abeona when they go, Mens for a good mind for them, Volumnus and Volumna for a good will for them? The nuptial gods for their marriage, the field gods for their harvest, and chiefly Fructesia; Mars and Bellona for their fights, Victoria for their victories, Honor for their honours, Pecunia for their riches, Æsculanus and his son Argentus for coin enough both of brass and silver (the first is the father, because brass money was in use before silver): I wonder that Argentinus begot not Aurinus, for gold followed soon after. If they had had Aurinus, sure as death he should have had place of father and grandfather, as well as Jove had above Saturn: what need men run unto so many for this good or that (to such a crew as neither I can reckon nor themselves discern, having a god for every little act and accident of men); when as Felicity would have bestowed all, in far less time and with far less toil; nor need any other be troubled, either for bestowing of good, or

diverting of bad. Why should Fessonia be called unto the weary, Pellonio to chase away the foe, Apollo or Æsculapius to the sick, or both, and few enough in a disease of danger? Nor needed Spinensis to meddle with the thorns, nor any entreaty to keep away Rubigo: only Felicity's present aid would keep all mischiefs away, and repulse them at their first approach. But now to shut up this discourse of these two, Virtue and Felicity; if Felicity be the reward of Virtue, then is it no goddess, but a gift of God, but if it be a goddess, it must needs be the producer of Virtue, seeing that to attain to virtue, is the greatest felicity.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of the knowledge of these Pagan gods, which Varro boasts he taught the Romans.

WHAT great good turn then does Varro boast that he has done unto his citizens, in the particularising of the gods, and their worships that the Romans must observe? For what boots it (says he) to know a physician by name and by face, and yet to be ignorant what a physician is? so likewise it boots not (says he) to know Æsculapius unless you know that he cures diseases: otherwise you know not what to pray to him for. And this he confirms in another simile saying: A man cannot live well, nay he cannot live at all, if he know not the smith, the painter, the carpenter, &c., distinctly; where to have this necessary, where that, where to be taught this or that. So it is plain, that to know what power every god hath, and upon what object, is wonderfully useful. For thence may we gather whom to sue unto for every need we have, and not follow the mimics, in begging water of Bacchus, and wine of the Nymphs. Who would not give this man thanks now, if his doctrine were true, and did show the worship of the true God, of whom alone we are to ask all things.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the absolute sufficiency of Felicity alone, whom the Romans (who worshipped so many gods) did for a great while neglect, and gave no divine honours unto.

BUT if their books be true, and that Felicity be a goddess, how comes it to pass that she has not all the worship unto herself, being of herself sufficient for all needs? Who wishes anything but happiness? And

why was it so late, before Lucullus, the first of all the Romans, thought it fit to erect her a temple? Why did not Romulus, that wished the city so well, provide a place for her, seeing that her presence might have saved him all his labour in praying to the other gods? he had never been king, nor ever come to have been a god, had not she stuck to him. Why then did he clog the Romans with such a noise of gods, Janus, Jove, Mars, Picus, Faunus, Tiberinus, Hercules; and all the rest. And what did Tatius, bringing in Saturn, Ops, Sol, Luna, Vulcan, Lux, and to close up all, sweet Cloacina, leaving Felicity in the dust? And what was Numa's mind to gather such an host of he gods, and she gods, and leave her out? Could he not find her for the multitude? Verily Hostilius would never have brought Fear and Pallor to be templified, if he had had any knowledge of this Felicity. For had she come there, Fear and Pallor must need have been a packing. Again, in all the increase of the empire, she was not thought of, no man served her; what was the reason of this? Was the empire more great than happy? Perhaps so: for how can true Felicity be there where true Piety is not? And Piety is the true worship of the true God, not the adoration of those multitude of false gods, or devils, whether you will. But afterwards, when Felicity was entertained, and had got a place with the rest, the great infelicity of the civil wars followed presently upon it. Was not Felicity angry (think you) that she was let pass so long, and then taken in at last, not to her honour but to her disgrace, being ranked with Priapus, and Cloacina, and Fear, and Pallor, and Fever, and a sort that were no gods to be worshipped, but defects in the worshippers? Lastly, seeing she must be fain to share honours with so unworthy a rabble, at least why had she not a better part of honours than the others? Who could endure that the goddess Felicity should stand by and neither be reckoned amongst the gods Consentes, that were of Jove's council, nor the Select gods neither? Nor had not a temple that should have excelled all the rest in height of posture? and magnificence of fabric? why should she not have a better than Jupiter? For she herself gave him his kingdom, if ever he were a happy king, that happiness is of better worth than sovereignty, is most plain. For many men doubtless may be found, that would not be kings, but none that would not be happy. So that if the gods were asked their minds, by augury, or otherwise, whether they would give place to Felicity or no, I will undertake, that if all the room besides were filled with other gods' altars, that Felicity could not have a fit place built, Jupiter himself would give place, and let Felicity have his own seat upon the top of the Tarpeian hill. Nor is there one of them that would not do as much, unless (which is impossible) some of them would be so mad as to lose her favour and grow miserable. Jupiter would never use her, as he was used by Mars, Terminus, and Juventas, who by no means could be

persuaded to give their king place. For (as they write) Tarquin being desirous to build the Capitol, and seeing the place he thought fittest, already taken up by other strange gods, durst not control them, but thought that good manners would teach them to give place unto their king: and being that there was a great fort there, where he meant to build, he asked them by augury whether they were willing to resign the place to their king or no? All were content, except Mars, Terminus, and Juventas: and so the Capitol was built, and they for their sauciness had such small monuments left, that the Romans' greatest divines did scarcely know where they stood. But Jove would never deal so uncivilly with Felicity, as Mars, Terminus, and Juventas dealt with him. And then those that would not yield to him, assuredly would yield to her, that made him their king. Or if they would not; why then it were because they had rather abide in obscurity in Felicity's house, than to sit in eminence without her company, so that had she but the highest place, the citizens would soon learn where to pray for good gifts, and in time, by the very persuasion of nature: put away that swarm of gods, and pray only to Felicity, offer only to her, and frequent her temple only, if they desired to be happy, as all would do; and so all men would come and beg herself of herself, for who would beg anything but Felicity, of any god? so that Felicity having power to be abiding with whom she list (as she may if she be a goddess), what man were so foolish as to go and entreat her company of another god, when he may obtain it of herself? So that the dignity of place also should of right be hers from all the other gods. For they write that the ancient Romans did worship one Summanus, one that ruled the thunder of the night, above Jupiter that ruled the day thunder. But after that Jupiter had gotten him such a sumptuous house, the company came in so fast unto him, that one could scarce find one within a while, that had heard, nay more, that had read so much as the name of Summanus. But now if Felicity be no goddess, being (in truth) but a gift of God; then is it fit to find out that God that can bestow it, and to throw aside this dangerous roll of counterfeit deities, which a skull of fools do run thus headlong after, taking God's gifts for God Himself, and by their obstinacy giving Him continual cause of offence, whose gifts they are; for so shall He never want infelicity that honours Felicity as a goddess, and neglects Him that is the giver of all felicity: even as he shall never want hunger that licks the picture of a crust, and never asks bread of him that hath it to give him.

CHAPTER XXIV.

*What reasons the Pagans bring, for their worshipping of gods' gifts
for gods themselves.*

LET us examine their reasons. Do you think (say they) our ancestors were such fools that they knew not those to be gods' gifts, and not gods? No truly; but because they knew that they could not have them but from some god, they called their gods which they thought had the gift of them, by the names of the things themselves; sometimes deriving words from thence (as Bellona of *bellum*, war, not Bellum itself, and Cunina of *cunæ*, needles, not Cuna. Segetia of *seges*, corn, not Seges itself; Pomona of *pomum*, an apple, not Pomum; and Bubona of *bos*, an ox, not Bos); and sometimes never altering the word at all, but calling them just as the thing is called: as Pecunia the goddess, that gives money (not holding money itself for a goddess), and Virtus, that gives virtue, Honor for honour, Victoria for victory, Concordia for concord, and so Felicity being called a goddess, is not meant of the thing given, but of the power that giveth it. Well, out of this reason will we find an easy way to persuade all such as have not hardened their hearts to be of our opinion.

CHAPTER XXV.

*Of the worship of one god only, whose name although they knew not, yet
they took him for the giver of felicity.*

FOR if man's weakness observed thus much, that felicity could not come but from some god, and that this was perceived by those that worshipped so many gods, who therefore would call him that they thought could give it, by the name of the thing itself, knowing no other name he had; this proves sufficiently that Jupiter could not give felicity, whom they worshipped already, but only he whom they worshipped under the name of Felicity. So then, is it confirmed that they thought Felicity could not be given but by a god that they knew not well; seek but him out then and give him his due worship and it sufficeth. Cashier this return of innumerable and as unnecessary gods, nay devils: let not that god suffice the worship, whose gift is not sufficient: hold not (I say) that god for a sufficient giver of felicity whose felicity is wholly insufficient. But in whom is it sufficient? in the true and only God, the giver of all felicity: serve Him. It is not he that they call Jove. For if it were he, they would never stand seeking this gift of another, who goes under the name of Felicity: besides they would not do Jove's

honour that wrong, as for to count him as Jove is counted ; an adulterer with other men's wives, and an unchaste lover, and ravisher of fair boys.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of the stage-plays which the gods exacted of their servants.

"BUT these were fictions of Homer," quoth Tully, "transferring human affects unto the gods. I had rather they had transferred divine affects unto us." This grave man indeed was much displeased with the unseasonable fictions of those times. Aye, but why then did the wisest and most learned men of all the Romans present stage-plays, writing them, and acting them to the honour of their gods, and as parts and points of their religion? Here Tully exclaims not against poetic fictions but against the old ordinances. And would not the ordainers exclaim too, and say, why what do we? our gods entreated us, nay forced us upon pain of destruction to exhibit them such things as honours : punishing the neglect thereof with severity, and showing themselves pleased in the amendment of that neglect. That which I will now relate, is reckoned as one of their most virtuous and memorable deeds. Titus Latinus, a rustic housekeeper, was warned in a dream to bid the Roman Senate restore the stage-plays, because upon their first day of presentation an offender carried out and whipped to death before all the people had sore displeased the gods that do not love such sad spectacles, but are all for mirth and jollity : well, he neglected to tell the Senate this, but was warned again the next night. Neglecting it again, suddenly his son died. And the third night he was warned again upon pain of a greater mischief. He not daring as yet to reveal it, fell into a sore and horrible disease. And then having imparted it to his friends, they counselled him to open it to the Senate, so he was carried to them in his coach, and having told his dream, grew well in an instant, and went home on his feet. The Senate being amazed with his miracle renewed the plays with treble charges, who sees not now (that sees at all) how villainously these devils abuse those men that are their slaves, in forcing these things from them, as honours, which an upright judgment would easily discern to be obscenities. From this slavery can nothing deliver man but the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord : in those plays, the gods' crimes, that the poets feign, are presented : yet by the gods' express charge were they by the Senate renewed. And there did the stage-players act, produce, and present Jove, for the veriest whore-master in the world ; had this been false, he should have been offended at it ; but taking delight (as he did) to have villainies invented upon him, who would serve him that would not serve

the devil? Is this the founder, enlarger, and establisher of the Roman Empire? and is he not more base and abject than any Roman that beheld him thus presented? can he give happiness that loved this unhappy worship, and would be more unhappily angry if it were not afforded him?

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of the three kinds of gods whereof Scævola disputed.

It is least in memory that Scævola, their learned high-priest, disputed of three kinds of gods that were taught by authors; one by the poets, one by the philosophers, one by the princes of the city. The first sort, he says, were but fooleries, much of their doctrine being fictitious: the second, disagreeing from a politic state, having much superfluity, and divers inconveniences, for the superfluity: it is no great matter, for it is a saying amongst men, "superfluity hurteth not;" but what are the inconveniences; to deny openly that Hercules, Æsculapius, Castor, and Pollux are gods; for the philosophers teach that they were men, and died as other men do. To what end is this, but that the cities should be filled with statues of such as are no true gods, the true god having neither sex, age, nor body. But this, Scævola would not have the people to know, because he did not think it was false himself. So that he holds it fit cities should be deluded in religion, which indeed Varro sticks not plainly to affirm. "*De re. vin.*" A godly religion, whereto when weak minds going for refuge, and seeking to be freed by the truth, must be told, that it is fit that they be illuded. Nor does the same book conceal the cause why Scævola rejects the poets' gods. It is because they do so deform them with their stories, that they are not fit to keep good men company, one being described to steal, and another to commit adultery: as also to do and say so filthily and fondly, as that the three goddesses, striving for eminence of beauty, the other two being cast by Venus, destroyed Troy; that Jove was turned to a bull, or a swan, to have the company of some wench or other; that a goddess married a man, and that Saturn ate up his sons. No wonder! No vice, but there you have it set down, quite against the natures of the deities. O Scævola, abolish those plays if it be in thy power! tell the people what absurd honours they offer the gods, gazing on their guilt, and remembering their pranks, as a licence for their own practice! If they say, you priests brought them us, entreat the gods that commanded them, to suffer their abolishment: if they be bad, and therefore at no hand credible, with reverence to the gods' majesties, then the greater is the injury that is offered unto them, of whom they are so freely invented. But they are devils (Scævola) teaching guiltiness, and joying in filthi-

ness, they will not hear thee. They think it no injury to have such black crimes imputed unto them, but rather hold themselves wronged if they be not imputed, and exhibited. Now if thou callest on Jove against them, were there no other cause for it, but the most frequent presenting of his enormities (though you call him the god and king of the world), would he not think himself highly wronged by you, in ranking him in worship with such filthy companions, and making him governor of them?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Whether the Romans' diligence in this worship of those gods, did their empire any good at all.

By no means then could these gods preserve the Roman Empire, being so criminous in their own filthy desiring of such honours as these are, which rather serve to condemn them, than appease them. For if they could have done that, the Greeks should have had their helps before, who afforded them far better store of such sacrifices as these, with far more stage-plays and shows. For they, seeing the poets tax their gods so freely, never thought shame to let them tax themselves, but allowed them free leave to traduce whom they pleased, and held the stage-players worthy of the best honours of their state. But even as Rome might have had golden coins, yet never worshipped Aurinus for it, so might they have had silver and brass ones without Argentinus or his father Æsculanus, and so of all other necessities. But so could they not possess their kingdom, against the will of the true God, but in despite of all the other, let them do what they list, that one unknown God being well and duly worshipped, would have kept their kingdom on earth in better estate than ever, and afterward have bestowed a kingdom on each of them in heaven (had they a kingdom before or had they none) that should endure for ever.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of the falseness of that augury that presaged courage and stability to the state of Rome.

FOR what a goodly presage was that which I spake of but now, of the obstinacy of Mars, Terminus, and Juventas, that it should signify that Mars' nation, the Romans, should yield the place to no man: that no man should remove the limits of their empire, because of Terminus,

and that their youth should yield to none, because of Juventas. Now mark but how these gods misused their King, daring to give these auguries as in his defiance, and as glorying in the keeping of their places : though if these antiquities were true, they need fear nothing. For they confessed not that they must give place to Christ that would not give place to Jove : and they might give Christ place without prejudice to the empire's limits, both out of the temples, and the hearts that they held. But this we write was long before Christ came, or that augury was recorded : notwithstanding after that presage in Tarquin's time, the Romans lost many a battle, and proved Juventas a liar in his prophecy, and Mars' nation was cut in pieces within the very walls, by the conquering Gauls ; and the limits of the empire were brought to a narrow compass in Hannibal's time when most of the cities of Italy fell from Rome to him. Thus was this fine augury fulfilled, and the obstinacy of the presages remained to prove them rebellious devils. For it is one thing not to give place, and another to give place and regain it afterwards. Though afterwards the bounds of the empire were altered in the East by Hadrianus' means, who lost Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Syria unto the Persians, to show god Terminus that would not give place to Jove himself, but guarded the Roman limits against all men, to let him see, that Hadrian, a king of men, could do more than Jove, the king of gods. The said Provinces being recovered afterward, now almost in our times, god Terminus has given ground again, Julian (that was given so to the Oracles) desperately commanding all the ships to be burned that brought the army victuals, so that the soldiers fainting, and he himself being slain by his foes' hands, there was no means for one man to escape, but by yielding to the foe so much of the empire as now to this day they possess : making a bargain not altogether so bad as Hadrian's was, but taking a middle course between two extremes. So that Terminus' standing out with Jove was but an unlucky sign and foolish augury, seeing that Hadrian's will, Julian's rashness, and Jovian's necessity all made him give room to them. The Romans that were of discretion, observed this well, but they could not overturn the inveterate idolatry wherein the devils had bound the city so fast : and they themselves, though holding these things vain, thought notwithstanding Nature should have that divine worship allowed her, which indeed is the true God's only peculiar, under whom she is at command. "These served the creature, rather than the creator," as the Apostle says, "who is blessed for evermore."¹ This God's help was needed, to send some godly men to suffer death for the true religion, and thereby to take away these erroneous illusions from the world.

¹ Romans i.

CHAPTER XXX.

The confessions of such as do worship those Pagan gods, from their own mouths.

CICERO being augur, derided the auguries, and blames men for letting their actions rely upon the voice of a crow or a daw. O but this academic faith, that all things are uncertain; he is not worthy to be trusted in any of these mysteries. Q. Lucil. Balbus in Tully's second book, "*De nat. deor.*" disputes hereof, and having proved these superstitions to be physical in nature, yet condemns the institution of images and their fables, in these words. "Perceive you not then that from the useful observations of these things in nature, the tract was found to bring in those imaginary and forged gods? hence came all the false opinions, errors and old wives' tales: for now are we acquainted with the shapes, ages, apparel, kinds, marriages, kindreds, and all are squared out by human fancies: nay they have turbulence of effects also. We have heard of their desires, sorrows and passions. Nor wanted they wars, if all tales be true: they fought in parties, not only in Homer, but all on a side also against the Titans and Giants: and hence arises a sottish belief of their vanity, and extreme inconstancy." Behold now what they themselves say that worship these forgeries: he affirms that these things belonged to superstition, but he teaches of religion as the Stoics do. "For," quoth he, "not only the philosophers, but all our ancestors made a difference between religion and superstition. For such as prayed whole days together, and offered for their children's lives, those were called superstitious." Who perceives not now that he, standing in awe of this city's custom, did notwithstanding commend the religion of his ancestors, and would fain have severed it from superstition, but that he cannot tell how? for if the ancients called those superstitious, that prayed and sacrificed whole days together, were not they worthy of that name also, whom he reprehends for inventing so many distinct ages, images, and sexes, &c., for the whole number of the gods? if the instituters of those be culpable, it implies guilt also unto these ancients that invented and adored such idle fooleries: and unto him also (for all his eloquent evasions) that must be tied by necessity to this absurd worship; and dare not speak in a public oration what he delivers here in a private disputation. Thanks therefore be given to our Lord Jesus Christ, from all us Christians, not to heaven and earth (as he would have it) but unto Him that made heaven and earth, who has overturned and abolished those superstitions (which Balbus durst scarcely mutter at) by His heavenly humility, His apostles' preaching and His martyrs' faith, that died for the truth and lived in the truth, having by these means rooted all errors not only out of the hearts of the religious, but even out of the temples of the superstitious.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of Varro's rejecting the popular opinion, and of his belief of one God, though he knew not the true God.

AND what say you to Varro (whom we are sorry should make plays as an honour to true gods in religion, though not in judgment, seeing he exhorts men to the adoration of the gods so religiously), does not he confess, that he is not of the opinion of those that left the Romans their religion, and that if he were to leave the city any institutions, he would rather give them their gods after the prescript of nature? But seeing that the former has been of so long a continuance, he says that it was but his duty to prosecute his discourse hereof from the eldest antiquities, to the end that the people should not be induced rather to honour than to condemn them; wherein this judicious writer shows that the things whereof he writes would be contemptible to the people as well as to himself, if they were not kept in silence. I should have thought one might but have conjectured this, but that himself says in many places that there is much truth, which the people ought not to know: nay and if it were all falsehood, yet it were fit the people should nevertheless think that it were truth: and therefore the Grecians shut up their Teletæ, and their most secret mysteries in walls. Here he has made a discovery of all the politic government of the world. But the devils take great delight in this playing double: making themselves the masters both over the deceivers and the deceived, from whose dominion nothing frees us but the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. This acute and learned man says further, that he thinks only those to discern God, who teach that He is a soul, moving, and swaying the whole world: and hereby, though He yet have no firm hold of the truth (for God is no soul, but the soul's Maker), yet if the city's custom had permitted him, assuredly he would have taught them the worship of one only God, and the Governor of the world: so that we should but have this only controversy with him, whether God were a soul, or the soul's Maker. He says also that the old Romans were a hundred three-score and ten years without idols: and had they been so still (quoth he) religion had been kept the purer; to prove which, he produces (amongst others) the Jews, and concludes, that whosoever they were that first invented images, they freed the city from all awe and added unto error: being well advised that the senselessness of the idols would make the gods themselves seem contemptible. But whereas he saith they added unto error, that proves, that there was some error there, before that images came in. And therefore his saying, that these only discerned God which called Him a soul governing the world; and his opinion that the gods' honours would have been purer without images, these

positions declare how near the truth he draws. For could he have done any good against such an overgrown error, he would have showed them how that one only God should have been adored, even He that governs the world, and that He is not to be pictured : and the youth of the city being set in so near a path to the truth, might easily have been persuaded afterwards, that God was an unchangeable nature, creating the soul also. These things being thus, whatever fooleries those men have discovered of their gods in their books, they have been laid open by the immediate hand of God (compelling them to confess them), rather than by their own desire to dissuade them : wherefore that we allege from them, is to control those that will not see from what a damned slavery to the devil, that same singular sacrifice of so holy blood, and the vouchsafing of the spirit has delivered us.

CHAPTER XXXII.

What reason the kings of the world had, for the permitting of those false religions in such places as they conquered.

HE says also, that in the gods' genealogies, the people followed the poets more than the philosophers, and thence the old Romans their ancestors, had their belief of so many sexes, marriages, and lineages of the gods. The reason of this (I suppose) was, because the politic and wise men did especially endeavour to nouse their people in this illusive manner, and to make them not only worshippers, but even imitators of the devils that delighted to delude them. For even as the devils cannot possess any, but such as they have deceived, so unjust and devil-like princes persuaded their people to their own vain inventions, under the name of religion, thereby to bind their affections the firmer to their service, and so to keep them under their sovereignties. And what ignorant and weak man can avoid both the charms of princes and devils?

CHAPTER XXXIII.

That God has appointed a time for the continuance of every state on earth.

WHEREFORE God, that only and true author of felicity, He giveth kingdoms to good and to bad ; not rashly, nor casually, but as the time is appointed, which is well known to Him, though hidden for us, unto which appointment notwithstanding He does not serve, but as a Lord sways it, never giving true felicity but to the good. For this, both subjects and kings may either have or want, and yet be as they are, servants and governors. The fulness indeed of it shall be in that life

where no man shall serve. And therefore here on earth, He gives kingdoms to the bad as well as to the good, lest His servants, that are but yet proselytes should affect them as great matters. And this is the mystery of His Old Testament, wherein the New was included : that there, all the gifts and promises were of this world, and of the world to come also, to those that understood them, though the eternal good that was meant by those temporal ones, were not as yet manifested : nor in what gifts of God the true felicity was resident.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of the Jews' kingdom, which one God alone kept unmoved as long as they kept the truth of religion.

To show therefore that all those temporal goods which those men gape after, that can dream of no better, are in God's hands alone, and in none of their idols, therefore multiplied He His people in Egypt, from a very few, and then delivered them from thence by miraculous wonders. Their women never called upon Lucina when their children multiplied upon them incredibly ; and when He preserved them from the Egyptians that persecuted them, and would have killed all their children. They sucked without Ruminas' help ; slept without Cunina, eat and drank without Educa and Potica, and were brought up without any of these puppy gods' helps : married without the nuptial gods, begot children without Priapus, crossed through the divided sea without calling upon Neptune, and left all their foes drowned behind them.¹ They dedicated no goddess Mannia, when heaven had rained manna for them : nor worshipped the Nymphs when the rock was cleft and the waters flowed out : they used no Mars nor Bellona in their wars, and conquered, not without Victory, but without making Victory a goddess. They had corn, oxen, honey, apples, without Segetia, Bobona, Mella, or Pomona. And to conclude, all things that the Romans begged of so many false gods, they received of one true God in far happier measure : and had they not persisted in their impious curiosity in running after strange gods, as if they had been enchanted, and lastly in killing of Christ, in the same kingdom had they lived happily still, if not in a larger. And that they are now dispersed over the whole earth, is God's especial providence, that what altars, groves, woods, and temples of the false gods He reprove, and what sacrifices He forbids, might all be discerned by their books as their fall itself was foretold them, by their prophets : and this lest the Pagans reading them with ours, might think we had feigned them. But now to our next book, to make an end of this tedious one.

¹ Gen. xlvii.



THE FIFTH BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

That neither the Roman Empire nor any other kingdom had any establishment from the power of fortune or from the stars.

WHEREAS it is apparent to all men's discretion, that felicity is the hope of all human desires, and that she is no goddess, but merely the gift of a god, and consequently that there is no god worthy of worship, but He in whose power it lies to bestow this felicity upon men ; so that if she were a goddess herself, the worship of all the rest should be entirely hers ; now let us look into the reasons why that God that can give those earthly goods, as well to the good as the evil (and consequently to such as are not happy), should vouchsafe the Roman Empire so large a dilatation, and so long a continuance : for we have already partly proved, and hereafter in convenient place will prove more fully, that it was not their rabble of false gods that kept it in the state it was in, wherefore the cause of this was neither Fortune, nor Fate, as they call them, holding Fortune to be an event of things beyond all reason and cause : and Fate, an event from some necessity of order, excluding the will of God and man. But the God of heaven, by His only providence, disposes of the kingdoms of earth, which if any man will say is swayed by fate, and mean by that fate the will of God, he may hold his opinion still, but yet he must amend his phrase of speech, for why did he not learn this of him that taught him what fate was ? The ordinary custom of this has made man imagine fate to be a power of the stars, so or so placed, in nativities or conceptions ; which some do separate from the determination of God, and other some do affirm to depend wholly thereupon. But those that hold that the stars do manage our actions, or our passions, good, or ill, without God's appointment, are to be silenced and not to be heard, be they of the true religion, or be they bondslaves to idolatry, of what sort soever ; for what does this opinion,

but flatly exclude all deity? Against this error, we profess not any disputation, but only against those that calumniate Christian religion, in defence of their imaginary gods. As for those that make these operations of the stars in good or bad to depend upon God's will, if they say that they have this power given them from Him, to use according to their own wills, they do heaven much wrong, in imagining that any wicked acts, or injuries are decreed in so glorious a senate, and such as if any earthly city had but instituted, the whole generation of man would have conspired the subversion of it. And what part has God left him in this disposing of human affairs, if they be swayed by a necessity from the stars, whereas He is Lord both of stars and men? If they do not say that the stars are causes of these wicked arts, through a power that God has given them, but that they effect them by His express command; is this fit to be imagined for true of God, that is unworthy to be held true of the stars. But if the stars be said to portend this only and not to procure it, and that their positions be but signs, not causes, of such effects (for so hold many great scholars, though the astrologers use not to say Mars in such an house signifies this, or that: no, but makes the child born an homicide, to grant them this errors of speech, which they must learn to reform of the philosophers in all their presages derived from the stars' positions): how comes it to pass that they could never show the reason of that diversity of life, actions, fortune, profession, art, honour, and such human accidents, that has befallen two twins; nor of such a great difference, both in those aforesaid courses, and in their death, that in this case, many strangers have come nearer them in their courses of life, than the one has done the other, being notwithstanding born both within a little space of time the one of the other, and conceived both in one instant and from one act of generation?

CHAPTER II.

Of the mutual sympathy and dissimilitude of health of body, and many other accidents in twins of one birth.

CICERO says, that Hippocrates, that excellent physician, wrote, that two children that were brethren, falling sick, and the sickness waxing and waning in both alike, were hereupon suspected to be twins. And Posidonius, a Stoic, and one much affected to astrology, labours to prove them to have been born both under one constellation, and conceived both under one. So that which the physician ascribes to the similitude of their temperatures of body, the astrologer attributes to the power and position of the stars in their nativities. But truly in this question,

the physician's conjecture stands upon more probability, because their parents' temperature might be easily transfused into them both alike at their conception: and their first growth might participate equally of their mother's disposition of body, and then being nourished both in one house, with one nourishment, in one air, country, and other things correspondent, this now might have much power in the proportionating of both their natures alike, as physic will testify. Besides, use of one exercise equally in both, might form their bodies into a similitude, which might very well admit all alterations of health alike, and equally in both. But to draw the figure of heaven, and the stars into this purity of passions (it being likely that a great company of the greatest diversity of effects that could be, might have original in diverse parts of the world, at one and the same time) were a presumption unpardonable. For we have known two twins, that have had both diverse fortunes, and different sicknesses, both in time and nature: whereof (methinks) Hippocrates gives a very good reason, from the diversity of nourishment, and exercise, which might be cause of different health in them: yet that diversity was affected by their wills and elections at first, and not by their temperature of body. But neither Posidonius, nor any patron of this fate in the stars, can tell what to say in this case, and do not illude the single and ignorant with a discourse of that they know not, for that they talk of the space of time, between that point which they call the horoscope, in both the twin's nativities: it is either not so significant as the diversity of will, act, manners, and fortune of the twins born doth require, or else it is more significant, than their difference of honours, state, nobility, or meanness will permit: both which diversities they place only in the figure of the nativity. But if they should be both born before the horoscope were fully varied, then would I require an unity in each particular of their fortunes, which cannot be found in any two twins that ever yet were born. But if the horoscope be changed before both be born, then for this diversity I will require a difference of parents, which twins cannot possibly have.

CHAPTER III.

Of Nigidius the astrologer's argument, in this question of the twins, drawn from the potter's wheel.

FRUSTRATE therefore is that notable fiction of the potter's wheel, which Nigidius (they say) answered to one that plunged him in this controversy, whereupon he was called Potter. Turning a potter's wheel twice or thrice about as fast as he could, he took ink, and in the turning made two marks (as it seemed) in one place of the wheel's edge: and

then, staying the wheel, the marks were found far asunder one from another upon the edge of the wheel, even so (said he) is the swift course of heaven, though one child be born after another in as short a time as I gave these two marks, yet in the heavens will be passed a great space. And that (quoth he) is the cause of the diversity of conditions, and fortunes betwixt two twins. Here is a figment now far more brittle than the pots that were made by that wheel, for if there be thus much power in heaven (and yet cannot be comprehended by the constellations), that one of the twins may be an heir and inherit, and not the other, how dare those astrologers give such presages unto others that are not twins, when as they are included in those secret points in nativities which none can comprehend? But if they say they do prognosticate this to others, because they know that it belongs unto the known and discerned spaces that pass in nativities, and that those moments that may come between the birth of two twins do but concern slight things, and such as the astrologer uses not to be troubled with; for no one will ask the calculator when he should sit, walk, or dine? How can this be said when we show such diversity in the manners, states, actions, and fortunes of two twins?

CHAPTER IV.

Of Esau and Jacob, two twins, and of the diversity of their conditions and qualities.

IN the memory of our forefathers (to speak of men of note) there were two twins born,¹ so near together, that the second held the first by the heel, yet in their lives, manners, and actions, was such a main disparity, that that very difference made them enemies one to another. I mean not this, that the one sat, when the other stood, nor that the one slept, when the other waked, these belong to those first marks and moments which they cannot comprehend who erect those figures of nativity for the astrologers to judge upon: one of them bound himself to serve for wages: the other served not at all: the one was loved by his mother, so was not the other: the one lost his honour and inheritance (a matter of great moment amongst them), and the other obtained it: and how great a diversity was there in their marriages, wives, children, and goods? exceeding much.

¹ Gen. xxv.

CHAPTER V.

How the mathematicians may be convicted of professing vanity.

WHEREFORE if these things belong to these spaces of time that pass betwixt the births of twins, and are not wrought upon by the constellations, why then are they presaged out of the horoscopes of others? But if they be presaged as pertinent unto the larger spaces of time that fall under the notice of artists, and not under these momentary minutes that are indistinguishable, then what use is there of the potter's wheel, but only to turn leaden heads about till they become brain-sick, and past discerning those mathematicians' vanities? And those whose diseases (so sympathising in all circumstances) made hypocrites out of the rules of physic, judge them to be twins, do not they sufficiently put down those that will needs make that proceed from the stars which arises out of the temperature of their body? For why did they not sicken as they were born, one after another? (for born together they could not be) or if their different times of birth be no cause of different times of sickness, why do they allege it to be the cause of other accidents? why should they travel, marry, beget children, and do such like at diverse times, only because they were born at diverse times, and yet not be sick at diverse times by the same reason? If their difference of birth changed their horoscope, and all other matters thereon depending, why then did that equality remain with the times of their sickness, that remained in the time of their conception: or if they say that the course of sickness only follows the conception, and all the rest the nativity, then ought they not to prognosticate anything concerning sickness at nativities, unless they have the hour of conception, but if the astrologer presage sickness without seeing the figure of the conception, because the said presage is included in those interposed moments of the birth, how would he tell either of those twins when he should be sick, who having each a diverse horoscope, yet must nevertheless fall sick both at one time? Finally, I ask again, if the intermission in the birth of two twins be so much, that it alters their whole fortunes, because of their horoscopes: and in altering of the four angles (wherein they put all the power), alters also their whole destinies, how can this come to pass, when as the time of their conceptions was both at one instant? Or if two that are both conceived at one point of time, may fortune to be born the one before the other, why may not two that are born both in one moment of time, have fortune to die the one before the other? for if that one and the same moment of their conception hindered not the succession of their birth, why should the same moment that is one in both the births, hinder the successive time of their death? If their

conception, being in one minute, permit these to have diverse fortunes in their mother's womb, why should not their nativity being of the same state, permit them to have diverse fortunes while they live upon earth? And to take away all the fictions of this art (or rather vanity) of theirs, in this one question, what is the cause, that such as are conceived both in one moment of time, both under one constellation, should nevertheless have their destinies in their mother's womb, to be born at several times? and yet, that two being born of two mothers, both in one moment of time, cannot have diverse destinies, whereby the one may die before the other, or outlive the other? did not their destiny enter upon their conception, or could they not have it unless they were first born? why is it said then that if the hour of conception be known, they can presage many things most oraculously? And hereupon it is said of some, that a certain wise man did make choice of an hour of copulation with his wife, whereby to beget a son whose after worth should be admired? And lastly, whereof comes it, that Posidonius the astrologer gave this reason for the two brethren's participated sickness, that it was because they were born, and conceived both together? he added, "conceived," because it should not be objected to him that it was not certain that such as were conceived together should be born both at the same instant: and that he might draw this mutual affect of theirs, not from their parity of temperatures, but from the power of the stars. But if there be such a power of equalising the destiny of twins in their conception, then verily the diversity of time in their birth ought not to alter it. If the destinies of twins be changed by their several times of birth, why may we not rather conceive that before their birth, they were appointed by destiny to several births? Shall not then the will of the man living, change the fate of his nativity, when as his order of birth does change the fate of his conception?

CHAPTER VI.

Of twins of different sexes.

It often falls out, notwithstanding, that in these concurrences and unions of time, conception, and constellation, the children conceived are the one a male, the other a female. I know two twins of diverse sexes, both of them alive, and lusty at this day. They are as like in favour, one to another, as their difference of sex can permit: but in their fashion, and order of life, so unlike that (besides the actions which must of necessity distinguish between men and women), he is continually in war in the office of a count and never comes home: she continually in her country where she was born, and never goes abroad. Nay, which

is more incredible (respecting the powers of the stars and not the wills of God and men), he is a married man, and she is a holy virgin; he has many children, and she was never married. Oh, but their horoscopes had a great sway in all those things: tush, I have shown the power of that to be just nothing, already: aye, but whatsoever it does, it is there, in the nativity, that it must do it. What, and not in the conception, wherein it is manifest that there was but one generative act concurrent? (for nature's power is such that a woman having once conceived, cannot second any conception, until she be delivered of the first, and therefore it is necessary that the twins' conceptions fall both in one moment: were their diverse horoscopes (think you) the cause that in their birth, he became a man-child, and she a woman? wherefore since it is no such absurdity to say, that there are some planetary influences that have effect only upon diversity of forms in bodies, as we see the alteration of the year, by the sun's access and departure, and diverse things to increase, and decrease, just as the moon does (crabs for example and all shell fish: besides the wonderful course of the sea): but that the mind of man is not subject unto any of these powers of the stars: those artists now desiring to bind our acts unto this that we see them free from, do show us plainly, that the effects of the stars have not power so much as upon our bodies. For what is so pertinent unto the body, as the sex thereof: and yet we see, that two twins of diverse sexes may be conceived both under one constellation. Wherefore what fonder affection can there be, than to say that that figure of Heaven which was one in the conception of them both had not power to keep the sister from differing in sex from her brother, with whom she had one constellation, and yet that that figure of heaven which ruled at their nativity had power to make her differ so far from him in her virgin's sanctimony.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the election of days of marriage, of planting and of sowing.

BUT who can endure this foolery of theirs, to invent a new destiny for every action a man undertaketh; that wise man aforesaid it seems, was not born to have an admirable son, but rather a contemptible one, and therefore elected he his hour, wherein to beget a worthy one. So thus did he work himself a destiny, more than his stars portended, and made that a part of his fate, which was not signified in his nativity. Oh fondness most fatal! A day must now be chosen for marriage: because otherwise one might light of an unlucky day, and so make an ill marriage. But where then is the destiny of your nativity? can a man

change what his fate has appointed, by choosing this day or that, and cannot the fate of that day which he chooses be altered by another fate? Again, if men alone of all the creatures of earth be under this starry power, why do they choose days to plant, and days to sow, and so forth; days to tame cattle, days to put to the males for increase of oxen, or horses, and such like? If the election of those days be good, because the stars have dominion in all earthly bodies, living creatures and plants, according as the times do change; let them but consider how many creatures have original from one and the same instant, and yet have such diverse ends, as he that but noteth will deride those observations as children's toys, for what sot will say that all herbs, trees, beasts, birds, serpents, worms, and fishes, have each one a particular moment of time to be brought forth in? yet men do use for trying of the mathematicians' skill, to bring them the figures of the births of beasts, which they have for this end diligently observed at home, and him they hold the most skilled mathematician, that can say by the figure, this portends the birth of a beast and not of a man, nay they dare go unto what beast it is whether fit for bearing wool, for carriages, for the plough, or the custody of the house, for they are often asked counsel of the destinies of dogs, and give answers breeding great admiration. Nay, men are now grown to that grossness of brain, that they think when a man is born, creation is tied to such an order, that not so much as a fly is brought forth in that region at that time, for if they give us but birth-room for a fly, we will draw them by gradation till we come to an elephant. Nor have they wit to consider this, that in their selected day of sowing corn, it springs and grows up altogether, and being grown to the height it ripens altogether, and yet the canker spoils one piece and the birds another, and men cut up the third of all this corn, that nevertheless grew up altogether. How will they do with the constellation of this, that has partaken so many kinds of ending? Or does it not repent them of electing days for these things, denying them to belong to heaven's disposing, and putting only men under the stars, to whom only of all the creatures upon earth God has given free and unconstrained wills. These being considered, it is no evil belief to think that the astrologers do presage many things wonderfully and truly, but that is, by a secret instinct of evil spirits (whose care it is to infect, nouse, and confirm men's minds in this false and dangerous opinion of fate in the stars), and not by any art of discerning of the horoscope, for such is there none.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of their opinion that give not the name of Fate the position of the stars, but unto the dependence of causes upon the will of God.

As for those that do not give the position of the stars in nativities and conceptions the name of fate, but reserve it only to that connexion of causes, whereby all things come to pass, we need not use many words to them : because they conform this coherence of causes to the will of God, who is well and justly believed, both to foreknow all things before the event, and to leave no event undisposed of ere it be an event : from whom are all powers, though from Him arise not all wills, for that it is the will of that great and all-disposing God, which they call Fate, these verses (of Anneus Seneca's I think) will prove—

“ Duc me summe pater, altique dominator poli,
Quocunque placuerit, nulla parenda mora est.
Assum impiger : fac nolle, comitabor gemens :
Malúsque patiar facere quod licuit bono.
Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trabunt.”

‘ Lead me, great Lord, king of eternity,
Even where Thou wilt, I'll not resist Thee.
Change Thou my will yet still I vow subjection,
Being led, to that that is in the good election.
“ Fate leads the willing, hails the obstinate.” ’

Thus in the last verse, he directly calls that Fate, which in the former he called the “will of the great Lord,” to whom he promises obedience, and to be led willingly, lest he be drawn on by force, because, “Fate leads the willing, hails the obstinate :” and Homer's verses translated into Latin by Tully are as these are—

“ Tales sunt hominum mentes qualis pater ipse,
Jupiter auctiferas lustravit lumine terras.”

‘ Such are the minds of men as Jove the great
Vouchsafes, that fills the earth with light, and heat.’

We would not bring poetic sentences for confirmation of this question, but because that Tully says, that the Stoics, standing for this power of Fate, use to quote this place of Homer, we now allege them, not as his opinion, but as theirs, who by these verses of Fate showed in their disputations what they thought of Fate, because they call upon Jove, whom they held to be that great God, upon whose directions these causes did depend.

CHAPTER IX.

Of God's foreknowledge and man's freedom of election ; against the opinion of Cicero.

AGAINST those men, Tully thinks he cannot hold argument, unless he overthrow divination, and therefore he labours to prove that there is no prescience, nor foreknowledge of things to come, either in God or man ; there is directly no such matter. Thus denies he God's foreknowledge, and idly seeks to subvert the radiant lustre of true prophecies, by propounding a sort of ambiguous and fallible oracles, whose truth notwithstanding he does not confute. But these conjectures of the mathematicians he lays flat, for indeed they are the ordinance to batter themselves. But for all that, their opinion is more tolerable, they ascribe a fate unto the stars, than his, that rejects all foreknowledge of things to come. For to acknowledge a God, and yet to deny that, is monstrous madness : which he observing, went about to prove even that which "the fool hath said in his heart ; there is no God :"¹ marry not in his own person, he saw the danger of malice too well ; and therefore making Cotta dispute hand-smooth against the Stoics upon this theme, in his books "*De natura Deorum* : " there he seems more willing to hold with Lucilius Balbus, that stood for the Stoics, than with Cotta, that argued against the divine essence. But in his books "*Of divination*," he directly opposes the foreknowledge of things, of himself and in his own person : all which it seems he did lest he should yield unto fate, and so lose the freedom of election : for he supposed that in yielding to this foreknowledge, fate would follow necessarily thereupon, without all denial. But howsoever the philosophers wind themselves in webs of disputations, we, as we confess the great and true God, so do we acknowledge His high will, power, and foreknowledge : nor let us fear that we do not perform all our actions by our own will, because He, whose foreknowledge cannot err, knew before that we should do thus or thus : which Tully feared, and therefore denied foreknowledge ; and the Stoics that held not all things to be done by necessity, thought that they were done by fate. What then did Tully fear in this prescience, that he framed such detestable arguments against it ? Verily this, that if all events were known before they came to pass, they should come to pass according to that foreknowledge. And if they come so to pass, then God knows the certain order of things beforehand ; and consequently the certain order of the causes ; and if He know a certain order of causes in all events, then are all events disposed by fate : which if it be so, we have nothing left in

¹ Ps. xiv. 1.

our power, nothing in our will : "which granted," says he, "the whole course of humanity is overturned : law, correction, praise, disgrace, exhortation, prohibition, all are to no end : nor is there any justice in punishing the bad, and rewarding the good." For avoiding of which inconveniences (so absurd and so pernicious) he utterly rejects this foreknowledge of things, and draws the religious mind into this strait, that either there must be somewhat in the power of our will, or else that there is a foreknowledge of things to come, but the granting of the one is the subversion of the other : choosing of the foreknowledge, we must lose the freedom of election, and choosing this, we must deny the other. Now this learned and provident man, of the two makes choice of freedom of election : and to confirm it, denies the foreknowledge utterly. And so instead of making men free, makes them blasphemous. But the religious mind chooses them both, confesses and confirms them both. "How," says he? "For granting this foreknowledge, there follow so many consequences that they quite subvert all power of our will : and holding thus by the same degrees we ascend, till we find there is no prescience of future things at all, for thus we retire through them. If there be any freedom of the will, all things do not follow destiny : if all things follow not destiny, then is there no set order in the causes of things : now if there be no set order in the causes of all things, then is there no set order of the things themselves, in God's foreknowledge, since they come from their causes. If there be not a set order of all things in God's foreknowledge, then all things fall not out according to the said knowledge. Now if all things fall not out as he had His foreknowledge of them, then is there in God no foreknowledge of things to come." To these sacrilegious and wicked opposers, thus we reply ; God doth both know all things ere they come to pass, and we do all things willingly, which we do not feel ourselves and know ourselves directly enforced to. We hold not that all things, but rather that nothing follows fate : and whereas fate uses to be taken for a position of the stars in nativities and conceptions, we hold this a vain and frivolous assumption : we neither deny an order of causes wherein the will of God is all in all, neither do we call it by the name of Fate, unless Fate be derived of *fari* to *speak*, for we cannot deny that the scripture says, "God spake once these two things : I have heard, that power belongeth unto God, and to Thee O Lord mercy, for thou wilt reward every man according to His works." For whereas He says, "God spake once," it is meant that He spoke unmovably, and unchangeably, that all things should fall out as He spoke, and meant to have them. In this respect we may derive *fate* from *fari* to *speak*, but we must needs say withal that it is used in another sense than we should have men to think upon. But it does not follow that nothing should be left free to our will, because God knows the certain and set order of

all events. For our very wills are in that order of causes, which God knows so surely, and hath in His prescience; human wills, being the cause of human actions; so that He that keeps a knowledge of the causes of all things, cannot leave men's wills out of that knowledge, knowing them to be the causes of their actions. For Tully's own words, "Nothing comes to pass without an efficient cause," is sufficient alone to sway down this matter quite against himself; for what avails the subsequence: "Nothing is without a cause, but every cause is not fatal, because there are causes of chance, nature, and will"? It is sufficient that nothing is done but by precedent cause. For those causes that are causal, giving original to the name of Fortune, we deny them not: we say they are secret, and ascribe them either to the will of the true God, or of any other spirit: the natural causes we do never divide from His will, who is nature's Creator: but the causes voluntary, God, angels, men, and divers other creatures have often in their will and power: if we may call that power a will by which the brute beasts fly their own hurt, and desire their good by nature's instinct. That there is a will in angels, I do absolutely affirm: be they good whom we call God's angels, or evil whom we call the devil's angels, fiends, or devils themselves. So men good and bad have all their wills: and hereby it is apparent, that the efficient causes of all effects, are nothing but the decrees of that nature, which is "the spirit of life:"¹ air or wind is called a *Spirit*: but because it is a body, it is not the spirit of life. But the spirit of life, that quickens all things, is the *Creator* of all bodies and all created spirits: this is God, *a spirit from eternity, uncreated*: in His will there is that height of power, which assists the wills of the good spirits, judges the bad, disposes of all, giving power to whom He pleases, and holding it from whom He list. For as He is a creator of all natures, so is He of all powers; but not the giver of all wills; for wicked wills are not of Him, being against that nature which is of Him. So the bodies are all subject unto diverse wills: some to our own wills (that is, the wills rather of men than of beasts), some to the angels, but all to the will of God: unto whom all wills are subject, because they have no power but what He gives them. The cause then that makes all, and is not made itself is God. The other causes do both effect and are effected: such are all created spirits, chiefly the reasonable ones. The corporal causes, which are rather effects than otherwise, are not to be counted as efficient causes, because they came but to do that which the will of the spirit within them doth enjoin them: how then can that set order of causes in God's foreknowledge deprive our wills of power, seeing they bear such a sway amongst the very causes themselves? But let Cicero wrangle, and his fellows, that

¹ Gen. i.

say this order is fatal, or rather fate itself; which we abhor, because of the word; chiefly being used in a false belief: but whereas he denies that God knows assuredly the set order of those causes, we detest his assertion, worse than the Stoics do: for he either denies God (which he endeavours under a false person in his books "*De nat. de.*" or if he do acknowledge Him, yet in denying Him this foreknowledge, he says but as the fool said in his heart, "there is no God:" for if God want the prescience of all future events He is not God. And therefore our wills are of as much power, as God would have them, and knew before that they should be, and the power that they have is theirs free, to do what they shall do truly and freely: because He foreknew that they should have this power, and do these acts, whose foreknowledge cannot be deceived: wherefore if I list to use the word *fate* in anything, I would rather say that it belonged to the weaker, and that *will* belonged to the higher, who has the other in his power, rather than grant that our liberty of will were taken away by that set order, which the Stoics (after a peculiar phrase of their own) call *fate*.

CHAPTER X.

Whether necessity have any dominion over the will of man.

NOR need we fear that Necessity which the Stoics were so afraid of, that in their distinctions of causes, they put some under necessity and some not under it, and in those that did not subject unto it, they gat our *wills* also, that they might be free though they were urged by *necessity*. But if that be *necessity* in us, which is not in our power, but will be done, do what we can against it, as the necessity of death; then is it plain, that our wills are subject to no such *necessity*, use we them howsoever, well or badly: for we do many things which we could not do, against our wills. And first of all to *will* itself: if we will a thing, there is our will; if we will not, it is not. For we cannot will against our wills. Now if necessity be defined to be, *that whereby such a thing must needs fall out thus, or thus*, I see no reason we should fear, that it could hinder the freedom of our wills in anything. For we neither subject God's being, nor His presciences, unto necessity, when we say God must needs live eternally, and God must needs foreknow all things; no more than His honour is diminished, in saying He cannot err, He cannot die; He cannot do this, why? because His power were less, if He could do it, than now it is in that He cannot. Justly is He called almighty, yet may He not die, nor err: He is called almighty because He can do all that is in His will, not because He can suffer what is not His will; which if He could He were not almighty.

So that He cannot do some things, because He can do all things. So when we say that if we will anything of necessity, we must will it with a freedom of will, it is true: yet put we not our will under any such necessity as deprives it of the freedom. So that our wills are ours, willing what we will, and if we will it not, neither do they will it: and if any man suffer anything by the will of another against his own will, his will has the own power still, and his sufferance comes rather from the power of God than from his own will: for if he willed that it should be otherwise, and yet could not have it so, his will must needs be hindered by a greater power: yet his will should be free still, and not in any other's power, but his that willed it, though he could not have his will performed: wherefore whatsoever a man suffers against his will he ought not to attribute it unto the wills of angels, men, or any other created spirits, but even to His who gave their wills this power. So then, our wills are not useless, because that God foresees what will be in them: He that foresaw it whatever it be, foresaw somewhat: and if He did foreknow somewhat, then by His foreknowledge there is something in our wills: wherefore we are neither compelled to leave our freedom of will by retaining God's foreknowledge, nor by holding our will's freedom to deny God's foreknowledge; God forbid we should: we believe and affirm them both constantly and truly, the latter as a part of our good faith, the former as a rule for our good life: and badly does he live that believes not aright of God. So God forbid that we should deny His foreknowledge to be free, by whose help we either are or shall be free. Therefore law, correction, praise, disgrace, exhortation, and prohibition are not in vain: because He foreknew that there should be such: they have that power which He foreknew they should have: and prayers are powerful to attain those things, which He foreknows that He will give to such as pray for them. Good deeds has He predestinated to reward, and evil to punishment. Nor does man sin because God foreknew that he would sin: nay, therefore it is doubtless that he sins, when he does sin, because that God, whose knowledge cannot be mistaken, foresaw that neither fate nor fortune, nor anything else, but the man himself would sin, who if he had not been willing, he had not sinned: but whether he should be unwilling to sin, or no, that also did God foreknow.

CHAPTER XI.

Of God's universal providence, ruling all, and comprising all.

WHEREFORE the great and mighty God with His Word and His Holy Spirit (which three are one), God only omnipotent, Maker and Creator of

every soul, and of every body, in participation of whom, all such are happy that follow His truth and reject vanities : He that made man a reasonable creature of soul and body, and He that did neither let him pass unpunished for his sin, nor yet excluded him from mercy : He that gave both unto good and bad essence with the stones, power of production with the trees, senses with the beasts of the field, and understanding with the angels ; He, from whom is all being, beauty, form and order, number, weight and measure ; He, from whom all nature, mean and excellent, all seeds of form, all forms of seed, all motion, both of forms and seeds derive and have being : He that gave flesh the original, beauty, strength, propagation, form and shape, health and symmetry : He that gave the unreasonable soul, sense, memory and appetite, the reasonable besides these, phantasy, understanding and will : He (I say) having left neither heaven, nor earth, nor angel, nor man, no nor the most base and contemptible creature, neither the bird's feather, nor the herb's flower, nor the tree's leaf, without the true harmony of their parts, and peaceful concord of composition ; it is no way credible, that He would leave the kingdoms of men, and their bondages and freedoms loose and uncompriſed in the laws of His eternal providence.

CHAPTER XII.

How the ancient Romans obtained this increase of their kingdom, at the true God's hand, being that they never worshipped Him.

Now let us look what desert of the Romans moved the true God to augment their dominion, He in whose power all the kingdoms of the earth are. For the better performance of which we wrote our last book before, to prove that their gods whom they worshipped in such ridiculous manner, had no such power ; and thus far have we proceeded in this book, to take away the question of destiny and fate, lest some man being persuaded that it was not the deed of the gods, should rather ascribe it unto fate than to God's will, so mighty and so omnipotent. The ancient Romans therefore (as their histories report) though like to all other nations (excepting the Hebrews) they worshipped idols and false gods, offering their sacrifices to the devils, not to the true Deity ; yet their desire of praise made them bountiful of their purses, they loved glory and wealth honestly gotten : honour they dearly affected and honestly, offering willingly both their lives, and their states for them. The zealous desire of this one thing suppressed all other inordinate affects : and hence they desired to keep their country in freedom, and then in sovereignty, because they saw how baseness went with servitude,

and glory with dominion. Whereupon they rejected the imperiousness of their kings, and set down a yearly government between two heads, called *Consuls à Consulendo*, of *providing*; not *Kings*, nor *Lords of reign and rule*: (though *Rex* do seem rather to come *à Regendo*, of *governing*, and *regnum*, the *Kingdom*, of *Rex*, than otherwise): but they held the state of a king to consist more in this imperious domination, than either in his discipline of governance, or his benevolent providence: so having expelled Tarquin, and instituted Consuls, then (as Sallust says well in their praise) the city getting their freedom thus memorably, grew up in glory, as much as it did in power: the desire of which glory wrought all these world-admired acts which they performed: Sallust praises also M. Cato and C. Cæsar, both worthy men of his time, saying the Commonwealth had not had a famous man of a long time before, but that then it had a couple of illustrious virtue, though of diverse conditions: he praises Cæsar, for his desire of empire, arms and war, whereby to exemplify his valour: trusting so in the fortune of a great spirit, that he roused up the poor barbarians to war, tossing Bellona's bloody ensign about, that the Romans might thereby give proof of their vigours. This wrought he for desire of praise and glory. Even so in the precedent ages, their love, first of liberty, and afterward of sovereignty and glory, whetted them to all hard attempts. Their famous poet gives testimony of both: saying:

“Nec non Tarquinius ejectum Porsenna jubebat
Accipere, ingentique, urbem obsidione premebat:
Æneadæ in ferrum pro libertate ruebant,” &c.

‘Porsenna girts them with a world of men,
Commands that Tarquin be restored, but then
To arms the Romans for their freedom run.’

For then was it honour to die bravely, or to live freely; but having got their freedom, then succeeded such a greediness of glory in them, that freedom alone seemed nothing, without domination, hammering upon that, which the same poet makes Jove to speak in prophetic-wise.

——“Quin aspera Juno

Quæ mare nunc, terrasque, metu, cælumque fatigat,
Consilia in melius referet, mecumque fovebit
Romanos, rerum dominos gentemque togatum.
Sit placitum, venient lustris labentibus ætas,
Cum domus Assaraci Phithiam, charasque, Mycenæ
Servitio premet, ac victis dominabitur argis.”

——‘And Juno though she yet

Fill heaven and earth with her disquiet fit,
Shall turn her mind at length, and join with me,
To guard the Roman's gowned progeny.

It stands, succeeding times shall see the day,
That old Assaracus's stock shall sway
Phithia, Micenæ, and all Argos round,' &c.

Which Virgil makes Jupiter speak, as prophetically, being fallen out true before he wrote these verses: but this by the way to show that the Romans' affection of liberty and domination, was a parcel of their most principal glory and lustre. Hence it is, that the same poet, in distributing the arts amongst the nations, gives the Romans the art of *domination* and sovereignty over others, saying—

“Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra
Crede equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus.
Orabunt causas melius, cælique meatus
Describent radio et surgentia sydera dicent,
Tu, regere imperio populos, Romane, memento,
Hæ tibi, erunt artes, pacique imponere morem
Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.”

‘Others can better carve in brass perhaps,
'Tis true: or cut the stone to human shape:
Others can better practise law's loud jars,
Or teach the motions of the fulgid stars.
But (Romans) be your arts, to rule, in wars,
To make all knees to sacred peace be bowed,
To spare the lowly and pull down the proud.’

These arts they were the more perfect in, through their abstinence from pleasures, from covetousness after riches (the corrupters both of body and mind), from extorting from the poor citizen, bestowing on beastly players. So that in the dominion of those corruptions which befell afterwards, when Virgil and Sallust did both write, the Romans used not the foresaid arts, but deceits and tricks to raise their glories. And therefore Sallust says, “At first men's hearts gave place to ambition, rather than covetousness, because that was more near to virtue; for the industrious and the slothful have both one desire of honour, glory, and sovereignty. But the first,” says he, “goes the true way to work, the latter by craft and false means, because he has not the true course. The true, are these, to come to honour by virtue, not by ambition: which honour, empire, and glory, good and bad wish both alike. But the good goes the true way, that is, by virtue leading him directly to his possession of honour, glory, sovereignty.” That this was the Romans' course, their temples showed, *virtue's* and *honour's* being so close together: (though herein they took God's gifts for gods themselves): wherein you might easily see, that their end was, to show that there was no access to *honour* but by *virtue*, whereunto all they that were good referred it, for the evil had it not, though they laboured for honour by indirect means, namely, by deceit and illusion. The praise of Cato

excels, of whom he says that "The more he shunned glory the more it pursued him." For this glory that they seek, is the "good opinion of men concerning such or such." And therefore that is the best virtue, that stands not upon other's judgements, but upon one's own conscience, as the Apostle says: "Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience;"¹ and again: "Let every man prove his own work, and so shall he have glory in himself only, and not in another."² So that glory and honour which they desire so, and aim so after, by good means, must not go before virtue, but follow it: for there is no true virtue, but levels at man's chiefest good. And therefore the honours that Cato required he should not have required, but the city should have returned him them, as his due desert. But whereas there were but two famous Romans in that time, Cæsar and Cato, Cato's virtue seems far nearer the truth of virtue, than Cæsar's. And let us take Cato's opinion of the state of the city, as it was then, and as it had been before. "Think not," says he, "that our ancestry brought the city into this height by arms. If it were so, we should make it far more admirable than ever. But they had other means which we want: industry at home, equity abroad, freedom in consultation, and purity of minds in all men, free from lust and error. For these have we gotten riot, and avarice, public beggary and private wealth: riches we praise, and sloth we follow: good and bad are now undistinguished, ambition devouring all the guerdon due to virtue. Nor wonder at it, when each one patches up a private estate, when you serve your lusts at home, and your profit or affect here. This is that that lays the State open to all incursion of others." He that reads these words of Cato in Sallust, may think that the old Romans were all such as those, whom we have shown to be so praiseworthy before: it is not so; for otherwise his words which we related in our Second Book should be false, where he says: that the city grew troubled with the oppressing power of the great ones, and that the people grew to a division from their fathers upon this cause: that there were divers other dangerous dissensions, and that they agreed in honesty and concord no longer than they stood in fear of Tarquin, and of the great war of Etruria: which being ended, the Senators began to make slaves of the people, to judge of their lives as imperiously as the kings had done, to chase men from their possessions, and only their faction bare the sway of all; unto which discords (the one desiring to rule, and the other refusing to obey) the second African war gave end, because a fear began then to return upon them, and called their turbulent spirits from those alterations to look to the main, and establish a concord: but all the great affairs were managed by a few that were as honest as the times afforded, and so by tolerating those evils, the State grew well up,

¹ 2 Cor. i.² Gal. vi.

through the providence of a few good governors : for as this writer says, that having heard and read of many memorable military deeds of the Romans by sea and land, he had a great desire to know what it was that supported those great businesses, wherein the Romans very often with a handful of men (to count of) have held out war with most powerful, rich, and victorious kings : and having looked well into it, he finds, that the egregious virtue of a very few citizens has been cause of this happy success of all the rest : surmounting wealth by poverty, and multitude by scarcity. "But after that corruption had eaten through the city," says he, "then the greatness of the commonwealth supported the viciousness of her magistrates." So the virtue of a few, aiming at glory, honour, and sovereignty, by a true line : that same virtue, is that which Cato so prefers : this was the industry at home, that he so commended, which made their public treasury rich, though the private were but mean. And the corruption of manners he brings in as the just contrary, producing public beggary through private wealth. Wherefore, whereas the monarchies of the East had been a long time glorious, God resolved to erect one now in the West also, which although it were after them in time, yet should be before them in greatness and dignity. And this he left in the hands of such men as swayed it, especially to punish the vicious states of other nations : and those men were such, as for honour and domination's sake would have an absolute care of their country, whence they received this honour : and would not stick to lay down their own lives for their fellows, suppressing covetousness, and all other vices, only with the desire of honour.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of ambition, which being a vice, is notwithstanding herein held a virtue that it doth restrain vices of worse natures.

BUT he is better sighted, that can see this desire of glory to be a vice : Horace saw it, and therefore said—

"Laudis amore tumes, sunt certa piacula quæ te,
Tèr purè lecto poterunt recreare libello."

'You swell with thirst of praise ; but I can tell
A medicine : read this book thrice over well.'

And in his "Odes" he sung this, to the same purpose of suppressing ambitious thoughts—

"Latiùs regnes avidum domando
Spiritus, quàm si Lybiam remotis
Gadibus jungas, et uterque, Pænus,
——Serviat uni."

' He that can conquer his affects rebelling,
 Hath larger monarchy, than he that sways
 The Libyans, Gades, and both Africas,
 — And more excelling.'

But, notwithstanding, those that do not bridle their exorbitant affects by faith, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the love of that intellectual beauty, though they cannot be happy, yet they may be less unhappy, in avoiding this thirst of human glory howsoever. Tully could not dissemble this, in his book "Of the Commonwealth," where speaking of the introduction of a prince, for a city, he says "he must be nourished with glory:" and so thereupon infers what worthy deeds this glory had drawn from his ancestors. So that they were so far from resisting this vice, that they did wholly give themselves to augment and excite each one, thinking it useful to the State: though in his books of philosophy, Tully never dissembles this contagion, but confesses it as clear as day. For speaking of studies, aiming at the true good and contemning the vain blasts of human praises, he infers this axiom, "Honour nourishes arts, and glory keeps all men on work in studies, and what men approve not, lies unregarded."

CHAPTER XIV.

That we are to avoid this desire of human honour: the glory of the righteous being wholly in God.

WHEREFORE without doubt, we had better resist this desire than yield to it. For much the nearer are we to God, as we are purer from this impurity: which although in this life, it be not fully rooted out of the heart, because it is a temptation that troubles even the best proficient in religion, yet let the love of righteousness suppress the thirst of ambitiousness. And thus: if some things lie unrespected, because men approve them not, and yet be good and honest, then let the love of human praise blush, and give place to the love of truth. For this is a great enemy to our faith, if that the affect of glory have more room in our hearts than the fear or love of our God; and therefore He says: "How can you believe, that expect honour one from another and seek not the honour that cometh of God?"¹ And likewise it is said of some that believed in Him and yet durst not profess it: "They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."² Which the holy apostles did not: for they preached the name of Christ, where it was not only not approved of (as Tully says, and what men approve not, lies unregarded), but

¹ John v. 44.

² John xii. 43.

where it was even detested, holding the rule that their Master (the mind's physician) had taught them: "Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven,¹ and before the angels of God:"² so that all their reproaches, by their cruel persecutions, their extreme pains, could not drive them from preaching this salvation, let the madness of man oppose what it could. And whereas this divine life, conversation, and doctrine of theirs, having suppressed all hardness of heart, and erected the peace of righteousness, was crowned with an unbounded glory in Christ's Church: this did not they rest, as in the expected guerdon of their virtues, but referred it all unto Christ's glory, by whose grace they were what they were. And the same did they transfuse into such, as they converted unto the love of Him, whereby they might become such as they were before them: for to keep them from touch of human ambition their Master taught them this, "Take heed that you do not your good deeds before men, to be seen of them, or else ye shall have no reward of your Father which is in heaven."³ But lest they should misconceive this, and fear to do well before men: and so become less profitable by striving to keep their virtuous acts in secret, than otherwise; He says again, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."⁴ Do not well with an intent that men should see you do so, and so turn to behold you, who are not what you are by them: but do so that they may glorify your Father in heaven, unto whom if they turn they may be such as you are. Thus did the martyrs, that excelled the Scævolas, Curtii, and Decii (not by punishing themselves, but by learning the inflictions of others) in true virtue, piety, and innumerable multitude. But the others, living in an earthly city, wherein the end of all their endeavours was by themselves propounded to themselves, the fame (namely) and domination of this world, and not the eternity of heaven, not in the everlasting life, but in their own ends, and the mouths of their posterity: what should they love, but glory, whereby they desired to survive after death in the memories and mouths of such as commended them.

CHAPTER XV.

Of the temporal rewards that God bestowed upon the Romans' virtues and good conditions.

SUCH therefore as we have spoken of, if God did neither mean to bless them with eternity in His heavenly city, amongst His angels (to which society that true piety brings men, which affords that true divine wor-

¹ Mat. x. 33.

² Luke xii. 9.

³ Mat. vi. 1.

⁴ Mat. v. 16.

ship (which the Greeks call *λατρεια*) to none but only the true God), nor to vouchsafe them an earthly glory or excellence of imperial dignity; then should their virtues, the good acts whereby they endeavoured to ascend to this glory, pass unrewarded. But the Lord says even of such as do good for human glory: "Verily I say unto you they have their reward:" these therefore that neglected their private estates for the commonwealth and public treasury, opposing covetousness, having a full care of their country's freedom, and living according to their laws, without touch of lust or guilt, these seemed to go the right way to get themselves honour, and did so; honoured they are almost all the world over; all nations very near received their laws, honoured were they then in all men's mouths, and now in most men's writings through the world; thus have they no reason to complain of God's justice; they have their reward.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of the reward of the eternal citizens of heaven, to whom the examples of the Romans' virtues were of good use.

BUT as for their reward that endure reproaches here on earth for the city of God (which the lovers of the world do hate and deride), that is of another nature. That city is eternal: no man is born in it, because no man dies in it. Felicity is there fully, yet no goddess, but a God's gift: of this habitation have we a promise by faith, as long as we are here in pilgrimage on earth, and long for that rest above. The sun arises not there both upon good and bad, but the Son of righteousness shines only over the good. There shall be no need to respect the common treasury more than the private, truth is all the treasure that lies there. And therefore the Roman Empire had that glorious increase, not only to be a fit guerdon to the virtues of such worthies as we fore-named, but also that the citizens of heaven in their pilgrimages upon earth, might observe those examples with a sober diligence, and thence gather how great care, love, and respect ought to be carried to the heavenly country for life eternal, if those men had such a dear affect to their earthly country for glory so temporal.

CHAPTER XVII.

The fruits of the Romans' wars, both to themselves and to those with whom they warred.

FOR what skills it in respect of this short and transitory life, under whose dominion a mortal man doth live, so he be not compelled to

acts of impiety or injustice. But did the Romans ever hurt any of the nations whom they conquered and gave laws unto, but in the very fury and war of the conquest? If they could have given those laws by agreement, it had been better (but then had been no place for triumph), for the Romans lived under the same laws themselves that they gave to others. This had been sufficient for the State, but that Mars, Bellona, and Victory should then have been displeased, and displaced also, if they had had no wars, nor no victories. Would not then the States of Rome, and other nations, have been all one? especially, that being done, which was most gravely and worthily performed afterwards, every man that belonged to the Roman empire, being made free of the city, as though they were now all citizens of Rome, whereas before there were but a very few, so that such as had no lands, should live of the common? this would have been granted unto good governors by other nations, sooner by entreaty than force. For what does conquering, or being conquered, hurt, or profit men's lives, manners, or dignities either? I see no good it does, but only adds unto their intolerable vain-glory, who aim at such matters, and war for them, and lastly receive them as their labour's reward. Does not their land pay tribute to the State as well as others? Yes. May they learn anything that others may not? No. And are there not many senators that never saw Rome? True. Take away vain-glory and what are men but men? And if the perverseness of the age would permit the very best means for to bear away the greatest honours, then should not this human honour be so prizeworthy howsoever, being but a breath and a light fume? But yet let us use these things, to do ourselves good towards God. Let us consider what obstacles these men have scorned, what pains they have taken, what affects they have suppressed, and only for this human glory which afterward they received as the reward of their virtues; and let this serve to suppress our pride also, that seeing the city wherein we have promised habitation and kingdom, is as far different from this in excellence, as heaven from earth, life eternal from mirth temporal, firm glory from fuming vain-glory, angels' company from men's, and His light that made the sun and moon, from the light of the sun and moon: then have the citizens of this heavenly region done just nothing, in doing anything for attaining this celestial dwelling, seeing that the other have taken such pains in that habitation of earth, which they had already attained: especially, the remission of sins, calling us as citizens, to that eternal dwelling; and having a kind of resemblance with Romulus' sanctuary, by which he gathered a multitude of people into his city through hope of impunity.

CHAPTER XVIII.

How far the Christians should be from boasting of their deeds for their eternal country, the Romans having done so much for their temporal city, and for human glory.

WHY is it then so much to despise all this world's vanities for eternity when as Brutus could kill his sons (being not enforced to it) for fear his country should lose the bare liberty? Truly it is a more difficult matter to kill one's children, than to let go those things which we do but gather for our children, or to give them to the poor, when faith or righteousness bids us. Earthly riches can neither bless us nor our children with happiness; we must either lose them in this life or leave them to be enjoyed after our death, by one, we cannot tell whom, perhaps by those we would not should have them. No, it is God, the mind's true wealth, that makes us happy. The poet rears Brutus a monument of unhappiness for killing his sons, though otherwise he praise him—

“ — Natosque pater fera bella moventes,
Ad pœnam patriâ pro libertate vocabit
Infœlix, utcumque ferent ea fata minores.”

‘ His sons, convict of turbulent transgression,
He kills, to free his country from oppression,
Hapless how ere succeeding times shall ring.’

But in the next verse he gives him comfort: “Vicit amor patriæ laudumque immensa cupido.” ‘Conquer’d by his country’s love, and thirst of prey’—the two things that set all the Romans upon admirable action. So then if the father could kill his own sons, for mortal freedom, and thirst of praise (both transitory affects), what a great matter is it, if we do not kill our sons, but count the poor of Christ our sons, and for that eternal liberty, which frees us from sin, death, and hell; not for human cupidity, but for Christian charity; to free men, not from Tarquin, but from the devils and their king? And if Torquatus, another Roman, slew his own son, not for fighting against his country, but for going only against his command, being general (he being a valorous youth and provoked by his enemy, yea and yet getting the victory): because there was more hurt in his contempt of authority, than good in his conquest: why should they boast, who for the laws of that never-ending country do forsake only those things which are never so dear as children; namely, earthly goods and possessions? If Furius Camillus, after his banishment by his ungrateful country, which he had saved from being oppressed by the valorous Veians, yet would deign to

come to free it the second time, because he had no better place to show his glory in: why is he extolled as having done great matters, who having perhaps suffered some great disgrace and injury in the Church, by his carnal enemies, has not departed to the Church's enemies, the heretics, or invented some heresy against it himself, but rather has guarded it, as far as in him lay, from all the pernicious invasions of heresy, because there is no other place to live in unto eternal life, though there be others enough to attain human glory in? If Scævola, when he saw he had failed to kill Porsenna (a sore foe to Rome), and killed another for him, to make a peace with him, put his hand into the fire that burned on the altar, saying that Rome had a multitude such as he that had conspired his destruction, and by this speech so terrified him that he made a present peace with them and got him packing: why shall any man talk of his merits in respect of the kingdom of heaven, if he lose (not his hand but) his whole body in the fire for it (not by his own choice but) by the power of the persecutor? If Curtius (to satisfy the oracle that commanded Rome to cast the best jewel it had into a great gulf, and the Romans being resolved that valour and men of arms were their best jewels) took his horse and armour, and willingly leaped into that gaping gulf; why shall a man say he has done much for heaven that shall (not cast himself to death but) endure death at the hands of some enemy of his faith, seeing that God, his Lord, and the King of his country, has given him this rule as a certain oracle: "Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul."¹ If the two Decii consecrated themselves to their country's good and sacrificed their blood (as with prayers) unto the angry gods for the deliverance of the Roman army, let not the holy martyrs be proud of doing anything for the partaking of their eternal possessions, where felicity has neither error nor end, if they do contend in charitable faith and faithful charity, even unto the shedding of their blood both for their brethren, for whom and also for their enemies by whom it is shed. If Marcus Pulvillus, in his dedication of the temple to Jove, Juno, and Minerva, false news being brought (by those that envied his honour) of his son's death, that so he might leave all the dedication to his fellow, and go perturbed away, did nevertheless so condemn the news, that he bade them cast him forth unburned, his desire of glory utterly conquering his grief of being childless: why should that man say he has done much for the preaching of the gospel (which frees and gathers God's citizens out of so many errors) to whom being careful of his father's funeral, the Lord said, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead"? If M. Regulus, not to deal falsely with his most cruel enemies, returned back to them from Rome itself,

¹ Mat. x. 28.

because (as he answered the Romans who would have stayed him) he could not live in the dignity of an honest citizen in Rome, since he had been a slave in Africa : and that the Carthaginians put him to an horrible death for speaking against them in Rome's Senate : what torments are not to be scorned, for the faith of the country, unto whose eternal happiness faith itself conducts us ? Or what reward had God for all His benefits, if, for the faith which every one owes to Him, He should suffer as much torment as Regulus suffered for the faith which he owed to his bloodiest foes ? Or how dare any Christian boast of voluntary poverty (the means to make his travel unto his country, where God, the true riches dwelleth, more light and easy) when he shall hear or read of L. Valerius, who, dying consul, was so poor, that his burial was paid for out of the common purse, or of Q. Cincinnatus, who having but four acres of land, and tilling it himself with his own hands, was fetched from the plough to be dictator, an office more honourable than the consul's, and having conquered his foes, and gotten great honour, returned to his old state of poverty ? Or why should any man think it a great matter not to be seduced from the fellowship of celestial powers, by this world's vanities, when as he reads how Fabricius could not be drawn from the Romans by all Pyrrhus the king of Epirus' promises, though extended even to the fourth part of his kingdom, but would live there still in his accustomed poverty ? for whereas they had a rich and powerful weal-public, and yet were so poor themselves, that one that had been twice consul was put out of that Senate of poor men by the censors' decree, because he was found to be worth ten pound in silver ; if those men that enriched the treasury by their triumphs were so poor themselves, then much more ought the Christians, whose riches are (for a better intent) all in common, as the apostles' Acts record : to be distributed to every man according to his need : " neither any of them said that anything he possessed was his own, but all was in common : " ¹ much more, I say, ought they to know that this is no just thing to boast upon, seeing that they do but that for gaining the society of the angels, which the other did (or near did) for their preserving of the glory of the Romans. These now, and other such like, in their books, how should they have been so known, and so famous, had not Rome's empire had this great and magnificent exaltation and dilatation ? Wherefore that empire, so spacious, and so continual and renowned by the virtues of those illustrious men was given, both to stand as a reward for their merits, and to produce examples for our uses. That if we observe not the laws of those virtues for attaining the celestial kingdom, which they did for preserving one but terrestrial, we might be ashamed : but if we do, then that we be not exalted, for as the apostle says, " The afflictions of this present time are not worthy of the glory which shall be showed unto us. " ¹

¹ Acts v.¹ Rom. viii. 18.

But their lives seemed worthy of that present temporal glory. And therefore the Jews, that executed Christ (the New Testament revealing what the Old concealed, that God was not to be worshipped for the earthly benefits which He bestows upon bad as well as good, but for life eternal, and the perpetual blessing of that supernal city), were justly given to be the slaves and instruments of their glory: that those that sought earthly glory by any virtue soever, might overcome and subdue those that refused and murdered the giver of true glory and eternal felicity.

CHAPTER XIX.

The difference between the desire of glory, and the desire of rule.

THERE is a difference between desire of glory and desire of rule: for though the first do incline to the second, yet such as affect the true human glory, have a desire to be pleasing unto good judgments, for there is much good in manners, whereof many can judge well although many again have not this good, nor go that honest way to glory, honour, and sovereignty that Sallust speaks of: "He goeth the true way." But whosoever desires to rule without that desire of glory which keeps men in awe of good judgments, he cares not by what villainy he compass his affect, and so his going about it will show. And therefore the hunter of glory either follows the true track or covers his courses so well, that he is held to be still in the true track, and thought to be good when he is not so; wherefore to the virtuous, contempt of glory is a great virtue: because God beholds it, and not the judgment of man, for whatsoever he does before men, to show this contempt, he has no reason to think they suspect him amiss, that think he does it for his mere glory. But he that contemns their opinionative praise, contemns also with it, their unadvised suspect: yet not their salvation (if he be good), because he that has his goodness from God, is of that justice, that he loves his very enemies, and so loves them that he wishes his slanderers and backbiters reformed, and to become his companions, not here but in his eternal country; for his commanders, as he respects not their praises, so he neglects not their loves, desiring neither to falsify their praises, nor delude their loves: and therefore urges them to the praise of Him, from whom every one hath all his praiseworthy endowments. But the man that, despising glory, dotes on domination, is worse than a beast, both in manners, barbarism, and lust's extremity. Such men Rome has had: for though it had lost the care of credit, yet it retained still the affect of sovereignty: nay Rome (says history) had many such. But Nero Cæsar was he that got first of all to the top-turret of all this enormity: whose luxury was such that one

would not have feared any manly act of his ; and yet was his cruelty such, as one ignorant of him would not have thought any effeminate spark resident in him, yet even such as this man was, have no dominion but from the great God's providence, holding man's vices sometimes worthy of such plagues. The scripture of him is plain : " By me kings reign, and princes : tyrants by me govern the earth." ¹ But lest *tyrannus* here should be taken for wild and wicked kings, and not (as it is meant) for all the old worthies, hear Virgil.—

" Pars mihi pacis erit dextram tetigisse Tiranni."

' Some peace I hope, by touching your king's hands.'

But elsewhere it is more plainly spoken of God, that He makes an "hypocrite to reign, because the people are snared in perverseness." ² Wherefore though I have done what I can to show the cause why the true and just God gave the Romans such assistance in erecting their empire's and city's earthly glory upon such a frame of monarchy, yet there may be a more secret cause than yet we see ; namely, the diverse deserts of the world, open to God, though not to us : it being plain to all godly men, that no man can have true virtue without true piety, that is, the true adoration of the one and true God : nor is that virtue true neither, when it serves but for human ostentation. But those that are not of the eternal city called in the scriptures the city of God, they are more useful to their earthly city in possessing of that world-respecting virtue, than if they wanted that also. But if those that are truly godly, and upright of life, come to have the government of estates, there can no greater happiness befall the world than through the mercy of God to be governed by such men. And they do attribute all their virtues (be they never so admired) unto the grace of God only, who gave them, to their desires, their faith and prayers : besides, they know how far they are from true perfection of justice ; I mean such as is in the angelical powers, for whose fellowship they make themselves fit. But let that virtue that serves human glory without piety be never so much extolled, it is not comparable so much as with the imperfect beginnings of the saints' virtues, whose assured hope stands fixed in the grace and mercy of the true God.

CHAPTER XX.

That virtue is as much disgraced in serving human glory as in obeying the pleasures of the body.

THE philosophers that make virtue the scope of all human good, do use in disgrace of such as approved virtue and yet applied it all to bodily

¹ Pro. viii. 15.

² Job xxxiv.

delight (holding this to be desired for itself, and virtue to be sought only for respect to this pleasure) to delineate a picture (as it were with their tongues) wherein Pleasure sits on a throne, like a delicate queen, and all the Virtues about her, ready at a beck to do her command. There she commands Prudence to seek out a way whereby Pleasure may reign in safety : Justice must go do good turns, to attain friends, for the use of corporal delights, and injury none : Fortitude's task is, that if any hurt (not mortal) invade the body, she must hold Pleasure so fast in the mind, that the remembrance of delights past, may dull the touch of the pain present. Temperance must so temper the nourishment, that immoderation come not to trouble the health, and so offend lady Pleasure, whom the Epicures do say is chiefly resident in the body's soundness. Thus the Virtues being in their own dignities absolute commanders, must put all their glories under the feet of Pleasure ; and submit themselves to an imperious and dishonest woman. Than this picture, there cannot be a sight more vile, deformed, and abominable to a good man, say the philosophers ; and it is true. Nor think I that the picture would be so fair as it should be, *if human glory* were painted in the throne of Pleasure : for though it be not a nice piece, as the other is, yet it is turgid, and full of empty air, so that ill should it beseem the substantial Virtues to be subject to such a shadow, that Prudence should foresee nothing, Justice distribute nothing, Fortitude endure nothing, Temperance moderate nothing, but that which aimeth at the pleasing of men and serving of windy glory. Nor are they quit from this blot, who contemning the judgments of others (as scorers of glory) yet in their own conceit hold their wisdom at a high price, for their virtue (have they any) serves human glory in another manner, for he that pleases himself is but a man, but he that builds and believes truly and piously upon God, whom he loves, applies his thoughts more upon that which he displeases himself in, than upon those things, which if they be in him, do rather please the truth, than him : nor does he ascribe the power he has to please unto any other, but unto His mercy, whom he fears to displease ; giving thanks for the cure of this, and praying for the cure of that.

CHAPTER XXI.

That the true God in whose hand and providence all the state of the world consists, did order and dispose of the monarchy of the Romans.

THIS being thus, the true God that gives the heavenly kingdom only to the godly, but the earthly ones both to good and bad, as Himself likes,

whose pleasure is all justice ; He is to have all power of giving or taking away sovereignty, ascribed unto Himself alone, and no other, for though we have shown some things that He pleased to manifest unto us, yet far, far is it beyond our powers to penetrate into men's merits, or scan the deserts of kingdoms aright. This one God, therefore, that neither stays from judging, nor favouring of mankind, when His pleasure was, and whilst it was His pleasure, let Rome have sovereignty : so did He with Assyria and Persia who (as their books say) worshipped only two gods, a good and a bad : to omit the Hebrews, of whom (I think) sufficient is already spoken, both of their worship of one God, and of their kingdom. But He that gave Persia corn without Segetia's help, and so many gifts of the earth, without any of those many gods (that had each one a share in them, or rather were three or four to a share), He also gave them their kingdom, without their helps, by whose adoration they thought they kept their kingdom. And so for the men : He that gave Marius rule, gave Cæsar rule ; He that gave Augustus it, gave Nero it : He that gave Vespasian rule, or Titus his son, both sweet-natured men, gave it also to Domitian, that cruel blood-sucker. And to be brief, He that gave it to Constantine the Christian, gave it also to Julian the Apostate, whose worthy towardness was wholly blinded by sacrilegious curiosity, and all through the desire of rule : whose heart wandered after the vanity of false oracles, as he found, when upon their promise of victory he burned all his ships that victualled his army : and then being slain in one of his many rash adventures, he left his poor army in the jaws of their enemies, without all means of escape, but that god Terminus (of whom we spake before) was fain to yield, and to remove the bounds of the empire. Thus did he give place to *necessity* that would not give place to Jupiter. All these did the true, sacred, and only God dispose and direct as He pleased, and if the causes be unknown why He did thus, or thus, is He therefore unjust ?

CHAPTER XXII.

That the originals and conclusions of wars are all at God's disposal.

So likewise does He with the times and ends of war, be it His pleasure justly to correct, or mercifully to pity mankind, ending them sooner or later, as He wills. Pompey's pirate war, and Scipio's third African war, were ended with incredible celerity. The slaves' war was also, though it cost Rome two consuls and many captains, making all Italy feel the smart of it, yet in the third year after it was begun, it was finished. The Picenes, Martians, Pelignians (Italians all) sought to pluck their

necks from their long and strict servitude unto Rome, though it now had subdued huge dominions, and razed Carthage. In this war the Romans were sorely foiled, two consuls killed, and many a tall soldier and worthy senator left dead : yet this war had continuance but unto the fifth year : marry the second African war lasted a great while, eighteen years : to the great weakening of the commonweal, and almost the utter ruin thereof, seventy thousand soldiers falling in two battles. The first African war held three and twenty years : Mithridate's war forty years. And lest anyone should think that in the ancient laudable times the Romans had any better rules to despatch war sooner than the rest, the Samnites' war lasted almost fifty years, wherein the Romans were conquered, even unto slavery. But because they loved not glory for justice, but justice for glory, they broke the peace and league which they had made. These I write, because some being ignorant in antiquities, and other some being dissemblers of what they know, might otherwise upon discovery of a long war since the time of Christianity, fly in the face of our religion, and say if it were not so potent, and if the old adorations were restored, that war would have been ended by the Romans' virtues, and the assistance of Mars and Bellona, as soon as the rest were. Let them that read of their wars, recollect but what uncertain fortune the ancient Romans had in the wars with the whole world, being tossed like a tempestuous sea, with thousand storms of invasions and arms : and then let them needs confess, what so fain they would conceal, and cease in this opposition against God's power, to possess others with errors, and be the butchers of their own souls.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the battle wherein Rhadagaisus, an idolatrous king of the Goths, was slain, with all his army.

NAY, that wonderful mercy of God's, in an act done within our memories, they will not so much as mention with thanksgiving, but endeavour, as much as in them lies, to smother it in eternal oblivion ; which should we do, we should be as graceless and ungrateful as they. Rhadagaisus, king of the Goths, having brought a huge army even before the walls of Rome, and holding his sword even over their necks (as it were), upon one day was overthrown so suddenly, that not so much as one Roman being slain ; slain ? no nor yet wounded, his whole army, consisting of about ten thousand men, was utterly defeated, he himself and his sons taken and justly beheaded. If this wicked barbarian had entered Rome with those forces, whom would he have

spared? what places would he have honoured, what God would he have feared? whose blood, whose chastity should have escaped him? But oh how these wretches boasted of his precedent conquests, that he had been so victorious, that he had gotten such and such fields, only because he was a daily sacrificer to those gods which Christianity had chased from Rome! For at his approach thither, where by the beck of God's majesty he was crushed to nothing, his fame was so spacious that it was told us here at Carthage, that the pagans believed, reported, and boasted that he could not be conquered by any of those that would not suffer the Romans to adore those gods, whose good favours he had obtained by the daily sacrifices he offered. Thus they never gave thanks for the merciful goodness of God, who having resolved to chastise the world's corruption with a greater barbarian irruption, yet did moderate His justice with such mercy, that at first He gave their leader into the hands of his enemies, because the devils whom he served should gain no souls by the persuasion of the glory of his conquests. And then when such barbarians had taken Rome, as against all custom of hostility defended, such as fled into the holy places, only in reverence of Christianity, professing themselves far greater enemies for the name of Christ, unto the devils and sacrilegious sacrifices (in which the other reposed his trust), than unto the opposed soldiers themselves: thus God did give the Romans this merciful correction, and yet by destroying the devil's adorer, showed them that there was neither any help in those sacrifices for the state of this present life (as they may see that will be attentive and not obstinate), nor that the true religion is to be refused for earthly necessities, but rather held fast, in hope and expectation of the heavenly glories.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The state and truth of a Christian emperor's felicity.

FOR we Christians do not say, that Christian emperors are happy, because they have a long reign, or die leaving their sons in quiet possession of their empires, or have been ever victorious, or powerful against all their opposers. These are but gifts and solaces of this laborious, joyless life; idolaters, and such as belong not to God (as these emperors do) may enjoy them: because God in His mercy will not have these that know Him, to believe that such things are the best goods He gives. But happy they are (say we) if they reign justly, free from being puffed up with the glossing exaltations of their attendance, or the cringes of their subjects, if they know themselves to be but men, and remember that: if they make their power their trumpeter, to

divulge the true adoration of God's majesty, if they love, fear, and honour Him: if they long the most for that empire where they need not fear to have partners: if they be slack to avenge, quick to forgive: if they use correction for the public good, and not for private hate: if their pardons promise not liberty of offending, but indeed only hope of reformation: if they counterpoise their enforced acts of severity, with the like weight of bounty and clemency, if their lusts be the lesser because they have the larger licence: if they desire to rule their own affects, rather than other's estates: and if they do all things, not for glory, but for charity, and with all, and before all, give God the due sacrifice of prayer, for their imperfections; such Christian emperors we call happy, here in hope, and hereafter, when the time we look for comes indeed.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of the prosperous estate that God bestowed upon Constantine, a Christian emperor.

FOR the good God, lest those that worship Him for the life of eternity, should think that no man can attain to this earthly glory, but such as adore the devils (whose power in those things bears a great sway), bestowed such store of those earthly benefits as no other man durst wish for, upon Constantine the emperor, one that worshipped no devils, but only the said true God. To him did He grant the building of a new city, partaker of the Roman empire, as the daughter of Rome herself; but excluding all diabolical temples, or idols. Long did he reign therein, and alone swayed the whole Roman world: he was in war most victorious: in suppressing tyrants most fortunate. He died an aged man, and left his sons all emperors; but lest any emperor after him, should turn Christian for hope of attaining Constantine's felicity (the scope of Christianity being not that, but life eternal), He cut off Jovinian far sooner than He did Julian, and suffered Gratian to be slain by his enemies' sword: yet with far more respect, than Pompey was killed, that worshipped the Roman gods. For Cato, whom he left as his successor in the war he waged, could never revenge his death; but Gratianus (though the souls of the godly regard not such solaces) was fully revenged by Theodosius, with whom he shared the empire, though he had a younger brother: being more respective of a faithful friend than of a too awful power.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of the faith and devotion of Theodosius Emperor.

So he did not only keep the faith which he owed him in his lifetime, but like a Christian indeed, received his little brother Valentinian into his protection and defence, when Maximus his murderer had chased him from his State: and held the care of a father over him, which he needed not have done, but might easily have taken all to himself, had his ambition overpoised his religion. But he preserved his State imperial for him, and gave him all the comfort honest courtesy could bestow. And when as the good fortune of Maximus begot him a terrible name, Theodosius did not creep into a corner of his palace, with wizards and conjurers, but sent to John, that lived in a wilderness of Egypt, whom he had heard was graced from God by the spirit of prophecy: to him sent he and received a true promise of victory. So soon after having killed the tyrant Maximus he restored the child Valentinian to this empire from whence he was driven, showing him all the reverend love that could be: and when this child was slain (as he was soon after, either by treachery, or by some other casualty), and that Eugenius another tyrant, was unlawfully kept up in his place, receiving another answer from the prophet, his faith being firm, he fetched him down from his usurped place, rather by prayer than power, for the soldiers that were in the battle on the usurper's side told it unto us, that there came such a violent wind from Theodosius' side, that it smote their darts forth of their hands, and if any were thrown, it took them presently in an instant, and forced them upon the faces of those that threw them. And therefore Claudian (though no Christian) sings this well of his praise—

“O nimium dilecte deo cui militat æthær,
Et conivratī veniunt ad classica venté.”

‘O God’s belov’d, whom powers aerial,
And winds come arm’d to help, when thou dost call!’

And being victor (according to his faith and presage) he threw down certain images of Jupiter which had been consecrated (I know not with what ceremonies) against him, and mirthfully and kindly gave his footmen their thunderbolts; who (as they well might) jested upon them: because they were glad, and said they would abide their flashes well enough: for the sons of his foe, some of them fell in the fight (not by his command): others being not yet Christians, but flying into the Church, by this means he made Christians, and loved them with a Christian charity; nor diminishing their honours a whit, but adding

more to them. He suffered no private grudges to be held against any one after the victory. He used not these civil wars, like as Cinna, Marius, and Sylla did, that would not have them ended, when they were ended; but he rather sorrowed that they were begun, than ended then, to any man's hurt. And in all these troubles, from his reign's beginning, he forgot not to assist and succour the labouring Church, by all the wholesome laws which he could promulgate against the faithless: Valens an Arian heretic having done much hurt therein, whereof he rejoiced more to be a member than an earthly emperor. He commanded the demolition of all idols of the Gentiles, knowing that not so much as earthly blessings are in the devil's power, but all and each particular in God's. And what was there ever more memorable than that religious humility of his, when being even forced by his attendants to revenge the injury offered him by the Thessalonians (unto whom notwithstanding at the Bishop's entreaties he had promised pardon) he was excommunicated and showed such repentance, that the people intreating for him, rather did lament to see the imperial majesty so dejected, than they feared his wrath when they had offended. These good works, and a tedious roll of such like, did he bear away with him out of this transitory smoke of all kind of human glory: their reward is eternal felicity, given by the true God, only to the good. For the rest, be they honours, or helps of this life, as the world itself, light, air, water, earth, soul, sense, and spirit of life, this He gives promiscuously to good and bad; and so He doth also with the greatness and continuance of the temporal empires of all men, which He bestows on either sort, as He pleases.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Augustine's invective against such as wrote against the books already published.

BUT now I see I must take those in hand, that seeing they are convicted by just plain arguments, in this that these false gods have no power in the distribution of temporal goods (which fools desire only), now go to affirm that they are worshipped, not for the helps of this life present, but of that which is to come. For in these five books past, we have said enough to such as (like little babies) cry out that they would fain worship them for those earthly helps, but cannot be suffered. The first three books I had no sooner finished, and let them pass abroad into some men's hands, but I heard of some that prepared to make (I know not what) an answer to them, or a reply upon them. Afterward I heard, that they had written them, and did but watch a time when to

publish it securely. But I advise them not to wish a thing so inexpedient: it is an easy thing for any man to seem to have made an answer, that is not altogether silent; but what is more talkative than vanity, which cannot have the power of truth, by reason it has more tongue than truth? But let these fellows mark each thing well: and if their impartial judgments tell them, that their tongue-ripe satirism may more easily disturb the truth of this world, than subvert it, let them keep in their trumperies, and learn rather to be reformed by the wise, than applauded by the foolish. For if they expect a time (not for the freedom of truth but) for the licensing of reproach, God forbid that that should be true of them, which Tully spoke of a certain man, "that was called happy, in having free leave to offend. O wretched he that hath free liberty to offend!" And therefore whatever he be, that thinks himself happy in his freedom of reproaching others, I give him to understand that far happier should he be in the lack of that licence, seeing that as now, he may in form of consultation contradict or oppose what he will, setting aside the affecting of vain applause: and hear what he will, and what is fit in honest, grave, free, and friendly disputation.





THE SIXTH BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

Of those that affirm they do worship these gods for eternal life and not for temporal respects.

IN the five precedent books I think they be sufficiently confounded that hold that worship justly given unto these false gods, which is peculiar only to one true God, and in Greek is called *λατρεία*, and that this worship ought to be offered unto them for temporal commodities, all which gods, Christianity convinces either to be frivolous and unprofitable images, and damned spirits, or at least, and at best no *creators* but *creatures*. But who knows not that neither those five books, nor all that a man could make, would stay and satisfy excess of obstinacy? for it is some men's glory (vain indeed) never to yield to the truth, but oppose it to their own perdition, in whose bosoms sin has so large an empire, for their disease exceeds all cure, not through the physician's want of skill, but the patient's impatient frowardness. But as for such as read the said books without any obstinate intent, or with little, and ponder the things they read in an impartial discretion, those shall approve, that our labour in their satisfaction, has rather performed more than the question required, than otherwise : and that all the malice, wherein they make Christianity the cause of all the afflictions falling upon this transitory world (the best learned of them dissembling their knowledge against their own consciences), is not only void of all reason and honesty, but fraught with light rashness and pernicious impudence. Now, therefore (as our method exacts), are they to be dealt withal that make eternity the end of this erroneous worship, which Christian religion so rejects : let us take our beginning from the holy and oraculous Psalmist, that says " Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and regardeth not the proud nor such as turn aside to lies."¹ But of all such as do go astray in those errors, the philosophers

¹ Ps. xl. 4.

are least faulty, that could never abide the fond opinions of the vulgar, who made their gods images, and fabled divers things of them, most false and unworthy the deities, or else believed them from the reports of others, and from that belief intruded them into the ceremonies, and made them parts of their worships. Wherefore with such as though they durst not openly, yet secretly disliked those things, this question may be fitly disputed of : Whether it be fit to worship one God, the maker of all bodies and spirits, for the life to come, or many gods being all (by their best philosophers' confessions) both created and advanced. But who can endure to hear it said that the gods which I reckoned up in part, in the fourth book, and have peculiar charges, can give one life eternal. And those sharp-witted men that boast of the good they do by writing of these things, in instructing the people what to intreat at each of their hands, would they commit such a gross absurdity as that which the mimics do in jest, asking water of Bacchus and wine of the Nymphs? As thus : would they teach a man that prayed unto the Nymphs for wine, if they answered him, We have no wine, go to Bacchus for that : then to reply, If you have no wine, I pray you then give me life eternal? What grosser foolery could there be than this? would not the Nymphs fall a laughing (for they are prone to laughter when they do not affect deceit as the devils use to do), and say to him, Why, fond man, dost thou think we have life eternal at command, that have not a cup of wine at command, as thou hearest? Such fruitless absurdity should it be to ask eternal life, or hope for it of such gods as are so bound to peculiar charges in things respecting this frail and transitory life, that it were like mimical scurrility to demand anything of any one of them which rests under the disposing of another. Which when the mimics do, men do very worthily laugh at them in the theatre, and when ignorant fools do it, they are far more worthily derided in the world. Wherefore the peculiar positions that we ought to make unto every god, by the governors of cities, their learned men have compiled, and left unto memory : which must be made to Bacchus, which to the Nymphs, Vulcan, &c., part whereof I recited in the fourth book, and part I willingly omitted. Now then if it be an error to ask wine of Ceres, bread of Bacchus, water of Vulcan, and fire of the Nymphs : how much more were it an error to ask life eternal of any one of them? Wherefore if that in our disputation about the earthly kingdoms, and in whose power they should be, we showed that it was directly false to believe that they consisted in the power of any one of those imaginary gods, were it not outrageous madness then to believe that the life eternal, with which the kingdoms of the earth are no way worthy to be compared, should be in the gift of any of them? Nor can their state, and height, compared with the baseness of an earthly kingdom in respect of them, be a sufficient cloak for their defect in not being able

to give it : because (forsooth) they do not respect it. No, whatever he be that, considering the frailty of man's nature makes a scorn of the momentary state of earthly dominion, he will think it an unworthy injury to the gods to have the giving and guarding of such vanities imposed upon them. And by this, if that (according as we proved sufficiently in the two books last past) no one god of all this catalogue of noble and ignoble gods were fit to behold the bestower of earthly states, how much less fit were they all to make a mortal man partaker of immortality ? Besides (because now we dispute against those that stand for their worship in respect of the life to come) they are not to be worshipped for those things which these men's erroneous opinion (far from all truth) have put as their proprieties, and things peculiarly in their power : as they believe that hold the honouring of them very useful in things of this present life, against whom I have spoken to my power in the five precedent volumes. Which being thus, if such as adore Juventas, flourish in vigour of youth, and those that do not, either die under age, or pass it with the griefs of decrepit sickness : if the chins of Fortuna Barbata's servants grow full of hair, and all other be beardless : then justly might we say that thus far these goddesses are limited in their offices : and therefore it were no asking life eternal of Juventas, that could not give one a beard, nor were any good to be expected of Fortuna Barbata after this life, that had not power to make one live till he had a beard. But now, their worship being of no use for those things in their power, seeing many have worshipped Juventas that live not to be youths ; and as many honoured Fortuna Barbata that never had good beards : and many without beards that worshipped her were mocked by them that had beards and scorned her ; is any man then so mad, that knowing the worshipping of them to be ineffectual in those things whereto their pretended power extends, yet will believe it to be effectual in the obtaining life eternal ? Nay, even those that did share out their authority for them (lest being so many, there should some sit idle), and so taught their worship to the rude vulgar, nor these themselves durst affirm that the life eternal was a gift comprised in any of their powers.

CHAPTER II.

What may be thought of Varro's opinion of the gods, who deals so with them in his discovery of them and their ceremonies, that with more reverence unto them he might have held his peace.

WHO was ever a more curious inquisitor of these matters than Varro ? a more learned inventor, a more diligent judge, a more elegant divider, or a more exact recorder ? And though he be not eloquent, yet is he so

documental, and sententious, that to read his universal learning will delight one that loves matter, as much as Tully will one that loves words. Yea Tully himself leaves this testimony of him, that the same disputation, that he handles in his Academic dialogues, he had (he says) with Marcus Varro, a man the most acute, and doubtless the most learned of his time. He says not the most eloquent, because herein he had his betters : but, most acute : and in his Academics where he makes doubts of all things, he calls him "doubtless the most learned : " being so assured hereof that he would take away all doubt which he used to induce into all questions, only in this academical disputation forgetting himself to be an Academic. And in his first book, having commended his works, " We, saith he, in the city were but as wandering pilgrims, thy books brought us home, and taught us to know what, and whom we were. Thy country's age, time, religious and political discipline, habitations, order, all the forms, causes, and kinds of divine and civil discipline, by these are fully discovered." So great was his learning, "as Terentius also testifies of him in the verse, 'Vir doctissimus undecunque Varro,' " Varro, a man of universal skill," who has read so much that we wonder how he has had time to write, and has written so much that we wonder how any man should read so much." This man (I say), so learned and so witty, had he been a direct opposer of that religion he wrote for, and held the ceremonies, no way religious, but wholly superstitious, could not (I imagine) have recorded more detestable absurdities thereof, than he has already. But being a worshipper of the same gods, and a teacher of that worship, that he professes he fears that his work should be lost, not by the enemies' incursion, but by the citizen's negligence, and affirms that with a more worthy and commodious care were they to be preserved, than that wherewith Metellus fetched the Palladium from the slaves, and Æneas his household gods from the sack of Troy : yet for all this, does he leave such things to memory, as all, both learned and ignorant, do judge most absurd and unworthy to be mentioned in religion? What ought we then to gather, but that this deeply *skilled man* (being not freed by the Holy Spirit) was over-pressed with the custom of his city, and yet, under show of commending their religion, gave the world notice of his opinion.

CHAPTER III.

The division of Varro's books which he styles, "The antiquity of divine and human affairs."

HE wrote one and forty books of antiquities : dividing them into affairs divine and human ; these he handled in five and twenty of them, the

divine in sixteen, so following the division, that every six books of humanity he divided into four parts ; prosecuting the persons, place, time, and nature of them all ; in his first six he wrote of the men, in the second six of the places, in his third six of the times, in his last six of the actions : one singular book, as the argument of them all, he placed before them all : in his divinity also he follows the same method touching the gods (for their rites are performed by men in time and place). The four heads I rehearsed he comprises in three books peculiar. In the first three of the men, the next three of places, the third of the times, the last of the sacrifices, herein also handling who offered, where, when, and what they offered with acuity and judgment. But because the chief expectation was to know to whom they offered, of this followed a full discourse in his three last books, which made them up fifteen. But in all sixteen, because a book went as an argument by itself before all that followed ; which being ended, consequently out of that five-fold division the three first books did follow of the men, so sub-divided that the first was of the priests, the second of the three, of the fifteen rite-observers. His second three books of the places handled (1) the chapels ; (2) the temples ; (3) the religious places. The three books of the times, handled (1) their holydays ; (2) the Circensian games ; (3) the stage plays. Of the three concerning the sacrifices, the first handled consecrations ; second, the private offerings ; third, the public. All these as the parts of their precedent pomp, the gods themselves follow in the three last, they on whom all this cost is bestowed : in the first the gods known ; second, the gods uncertain ; third, the whole company of them ; fourth, the selected principals of them. Now, in this goodly frame and fabric of a well-distinguished work, it is apparent to all that are not obstinately blind, that vain and impudent are they that beg or expect eternal life of any of these gods : both by that we have spoken and that we will speak. These are but the institutions of men, or of devils : not good devils, as he says, but to be plain, wicked spirits, that out of their strange malice, instil such pernicious opinions into men's phantasies, by abusing their senses, and illuding their weak capacities, thereby to draw their souls into vanity more deep, and unloose the hold they have, or might have, of the unchangeable and eternal verity. Varro professes himself to write of humanity before divinity, because first, says he, there were cities and societies, which afterward gave being to these institutions. But the true religion has no original from earthly societies : God the giver of eternal comfort inspires it into the hearts of such as honour Him.

CHAPTER IV.

That by Varro's disputations, the affairs of those men that worshipped the gods, are of far more antiquity than those of the gods themselves.

THIS therefore is the reason Varro gives why he writes first of the men and after of the gods who had their ceremonious institutions from men : even as, says he, "the painter is older than the picture, and the carpenter than the house, so are cities before their ordinances." But yet, he says, if he were to write of the full nature of the gods, he would have begun with them, and have dealt with men afterwards : as though he writes but of part of their natures, not of all : or that some part of the gods' nature (though not all) should not always be preferred before men? Nay, what say you to his discourse in his three last books of gods certain, gods uncertain, and gods selected? Here he seems to omit no nature of the gods. Why, then, should he say if we were to write of all the nature of gods and men, we would have done with the gods ere we would begin with the men? Either he writes of the gods' natures in whole, in part, or not all : if in whole, then should the discourse have had first place in his work : if in part, why should it not be first nevertheless? Is it unfit to prefer part of the gods' nature before whole man's? If it be much to prefer it before all the world's, yet it is not so to prefer it before all the Romans. And the books were written only in Rome's respect, not in the world's, yet (says he) the men are fittest before, as the painter to the picture, and the carpenter to the building : plainly intimating that the deities' affairs had (as pictures and buildings have) their original directly from man. So then remains ; that he wrote not all of the gods' nature, which he would not speak plainly out, but leave to the reader's collection. For where he says, not all, ordinarily it is understood some, but may be taken for none. For none neither all nor some. For as he says, if it were all the gods' nature that he wrote of, he would have handled it before the men's. But truth (hold he his peace) cries out, it should nevertheless have the place of the Romans' particular, though it be but particular itself. But it is rightly placed as it is, the last of all, therefore it is none at all. His desire therefore was not to prefer humanity before divinity, but truth before falsehood. For in his process of humanity he follows history : but in his divinity nothing but vain relations and idle opinions. This is the aim of his subtle intimation, in preferring the first, and giving the reason why he does so : which had he not given, some other means perhaps might have been invented for the defence of his method. But giving it himself, he neither leaves other's place for other suspicions, nor fails to show that he does but prefer men before

men's institutions, not man's nature before the deity's : herein confessing that his books of divinity are not of the truth pertaining to their nature, but of their falsehood effecting others' error : which (as we said in our fourth book) he professed that he would form nearer to the rule of nature if he were to build a city : but finding one established already, he could not choose but follow the grounded customs.

CHAPTER V.

Of Varro's three kinds of divinity, fabulous, natural, and politic.

AGAIN, what means his threefold distinction of the doctrine concerning the gods, into mythical, physical, and civil? and (to give him a Latin tongue) that is the first, *fabulare*, but we will call it fabulous, for *μῦθος* in Greek, it is a fable or tale. The second, natural, as the use of the word teaches plain. The third he names in Latin, civil; and then proceeds; mythical, the poet's use principally; physical, the philosopher's; civil, the vulgar. For the first (says he), it is fraught with fictions most disgraceful to the deities; as this, that this god is born of one's head, that of one's thigh, that of drops of blood; and this, that the gods were thieves, adulterers, and servants to man; and finally, they attribute such things to the gods, as cannot be resident but in the most contemptible wretch of all mortality, nor happen but unto such slavish natures. Here now as far as fear permitted, he makes a fair discovery of the injury offered to the gods by such ungodly fables: and here he might, seeing he speaks not of the natural nor civil philosophy, but of the fabulous which he thought he might reprehend freely. But now to the next. The second, says he, is that wherewith the philosophers have filled their volumes: wherein they dispute what, whence, and when the gods were, whether from eternity of fire, as Heraclitus held, or of numbers, as Pythagoras taught; or of *atoms*, as Epicurus believed; and suchlike as are far more tolerable within the schools than without, in the place of orations. Here he blames nothing in this kind, but only relates the controversies which divided them into sexes and factions. Yet this kind he excludes from the people's ears, but not the other, which was so filthy and so frivolous. O the religious ears of the people, and even with them, of Rome! The philosopher's discourses of the gods they cannot anyway endure; but the poet's fictions, and the player's actions, being so much dishonourable to the divine essences, and fit to be spoken of none but the most abject persons, those they abide and behold with patience; nay, with pleasure. Nay, these the gods themselves do like, and therefore have them decreed as expiations. Aye but, say some, we make a difference of these two kinds, the

mythical and the physical, from the civil, whereof you now are to speak ; and so does he distinguish them also. Well, let us see what he says to that : I see good cause why the fabulous should be separate from the rest, because it is false, foul, and unworthy. But in dividing the natural and the civil, what does he but approve that the civil is faulty also ? For if it be natural, why is it excluded ? And if it be not natural, why is it admitted ? This is that that makes him handle the human things before the divine, because in the latter he followed that which men had ordained, not that which the truth exacted. But let us see his civil divinity ; the third kind says he, is that which men of the city, chiefly the priests, ought to be cunning in : as, which gods to worship in public, and with what peculiar sort of sacrifices each one must be served : but let us go on with him. The first of those kinds, says he, was adapted to the stage. The second to the world. The third to the city. Who sees not which he prefers ? Even his second philosophical kind. This belongs (he says) to the world, than which they hold nothing more excellent. But the other two, the first and the third, them he distinguishes and confines to the stage and the city ; for we see that, that the pertinence of them to the city has no consequence why they should pertain to the world, though there be cities in the world ; for false opinion may get such a belief of truth in a city which has not any nature or place in any part of the world. And for the stage, where is that but in the city ? There ordained by the city, and for what end but stage plays ? And what stage plays but of their gods, of whom these books are penned with so much pains ?

CHAPTER VI.

Of the fabulous and politic divinity against Varro.

VARRO, seeing thou art most acute, and doubtless most learned, yet but a man, neither God, nor assisted by God's spirit in the discovery of truth in divinity, thou seest this, that the divine affairs are to be excluded from human vanities ; and yet thou fearest to offend the people's vicious opinions and customs in these public superstitions, being notwithstanding such, as both thyself held, and thy written works affirm to be directly opposite to the nature of the deities, or such as men's infirmity surmised was included in the elements. What doth this human (though excelling) wit of thine in this place ? what help doth thy great reading afford thee in these straits ? Thou art desirous to honour the natural gods, and forced to worship the civil : thou hast found some fabulous ones whom thou darest speak thy mind against : giving the civil some part of their disgrace whether thou wilt or no ; for thou sayest the fabu-

lous are for the theatre, the natural for the world, the civil for the city : the world being the work of God, the theatre and city of men ; nor are they other gods that you laugh at, than those you worship ; nor be your plays exhibited to any but those you sacrifice unto ; how much more subtle were they divided into some natural, and some instituted by men ? And of these latter, the poet's books taught one part, and the priest's another ; yet notwithstanding with such a coherence in untruth that the devils that like no truth approve them both : but setting aside your natural divinity (whereof hereafter) pleases it you to ask or hope for life eternal of your poetic ridiculous stage-gods ? No, at no hand. God forbid such sacrilegious madness ! Will you expect them of those gods whom these presentations do please and appease, though their crimes be the things presented : I think no man so brainlessly sottish. Therefore neither your fabulous divinity nor your politic, can give you everlasting life. For the first sows the god's turpitude, and the latter, by favouring it, reaps it. The first spreads lies, the latter collects them. The first haunts the deities with outrageous fictions, and the latter imputes these fictions to the honour of the deities. The first makes songs of the gods' lascivious pranks, and the latter sings them on the gods' feast days. The first records the wickedness of the gods, and the latter loves the rehearsal of those records. The first either shames the gods, or feigns of them : the latter either witnesses the truth or delights in the fiction. Both are filthy and both are damnable. But the fabulous professes turpitude openly, and the politic makes that turpitude her ornament. Is there any hope of life eternal where the temporal suffers such pollution ? Or does wicked company and acts of dishonest men pollute our lives, and not the society of those false-adorned, and filthily adored fiends ? If their faults be true, how vile are they worshipped ? If false, how wicked the worshippers ? But some ignorant person may gather from this discourse that it is the poetical fictions only and stage-presentments that are derogatory from the deity's glory, but not the doctrine of the priests, at any hand ; that is pure and holy. Is it so ? No, if it were, they would never have given order to erect plays for the gods' honour, nor the gods would never have demanded it. But the priests feared not to present such things as the gods' honours in the theatres, whenas they had practised the like in the temples. Lastly, our said author, endeavouring to make politic divinity of a third nature from the natural and fabulous, makes it rather to be produced from them both, than several from either. For he says that the poets write not so much as the people observe, and the philosophers write too much for them to observe : both which, notwithstanding they do so eschew, that they extract no small part of their civil religion from either of them : wherefore we will write of such things as the poetic and the politic divinities do communicate : indeed we

should acknowledge a greater share from the philosophers, yet some we must thank the poets for. Yet in another place of the gods' generations, he says the people rather follow the poets than the philosophers, for he teaches what should be done, there what was done: that the philosophers wrote for use, the poets for delight: and therefore the poesies that the people must not follow, describe the gods' crimes, yet delight both gods and men: for the poets (as he said) write for delight, and not for use, yet write such things as the gods affect, and the people present them with.

CHAPER VII.

The coherence and similitude between the fabulous divinity and the civil.

THEREFORE this fabulous, scenical, filthy, and ridiculous divinity has all reference unto the civil. And all that which all condemn, is but part of this which all must be bound to reverence: nor is it a part incongruent (as I mean to show) or slightly depending upon the body of the other, but as conformed and consonant as a member is unto the fabric of the whole body. For what are all those images, forms, ages, sexes, and habits of the gods? The poets have Jove with a beard, and Mercury with none; have not the priests so? Have the mimics made Priapus so obscene, and not the priests? Does the temple expose him to be honoured in one form, and the stage to be laughed at in another? Do not the statues in the temples as well as the players on the stage present Saturn old, and Apollo youthful? Why are Forculus and Limentinus (gods of doors and thresholds) of the masculine sex, and Cardea, goddess of hinges, of the feminine? Because those are found so in the book of priests which the grave poets held too base to have places in their poems. Why is the stage Diana armed, and the city's a weaponless virgin? Why is the stage Apollo a harper, and Apollo of Delphos none? But these are honest in respect of worse: what held they of Jove, when they placed his nurse in the Capitol? Did they not confirm Euhemerus that wrote truly (not idly) that all these gods were mortal men? And those that placed a sort of glutton parasite goddess at Jove's table, what intended they but to make the sacrifices ridiculous? If the mimic had said that Jove bade his parasites to a feast, the people would have laughed at it. But Varro spoke it not in the gods' derision but their commendation, as his divinity, not his human works do keep the record: he spoke it not in explaining the stage-laws, but the Capitol's: these and such like convince him to this confession, that as they made the gods of human shapes, so they believed

them prone to human pleasures : for the wicked spirits lost no time in instilling those illusions into their phantasies : and thence it came that Hercules' sexton being idle, fell to dice with himself, making one of his hands stand for Hercules and another for himself : and played for this : that if he got the victory of Hercules, he would provide himself a rich supper, and a wench of the temple stock : and if Hercules overcame, he would provide such another supper for him of his own purse : having thereupon won of himself by the hand of Hercules, he provided a rich supper, and a delicate courtesan called Larentina. Now she lying all night in the temple, in a vision had the carnal company of Hercules, who told her that the first man she met in the morning after her departure should pay her for the sport that Hercules owed her for. She departing, accordingly met with one Tarutius, a rich young man, who falling acquainted with her and using her company long, at last died and left her his heir. She having got this great estate, not to be ungrateful to the deities whose reward she held this to be, made the people of Rome her heir : and then being gone (none knew how), a writing was found that affirmed that for these deeds she was deified. If poets or players had given first life to this fable, it would quickly have been packed up among fabulous divinity, and quite secluded from the politic society. But since the people not the poets, the ministers not the mimics, the temples not the theatres are by this author taxed of such turpitude, the players do not vainly present the gods' bestiality, it being so vile, but the priests do in vain to stand so earnestly for their honesty, which is none at all. There are the sacrifices of Juno, kept in her beloved island Samos, where Jove married her. There are sacrifices to Ceres, where she sought her daughter Proserpina when Pluto had ravished her : to Venus, where her sweet delicate Adonis was killed by a boar : to Cibeles, where her sweetheart Atis, a fair and delicate youth, being gelded by chaste fury, was bewailed by the rest of the wretched gelded Galli. These sacrifices being more beastly than all stage absurdities (yet by them professed and practised), why do they seek to exclude the poets' figments from their politic divinity, as unworthy to be ranked with such an honest kind ? They are rather beholden to the players that do not present all their secret sacrileges unto the people's view. What may we think of their sacrifices done in covert, when the public ones are so detestably profane ? How they use the Eunuchs, and their Ganymedes in holes and corners, look they to that : yet can they not conceal the bestial hurt done unto such by forcing them. Let them persuade any man that they can use such ministers to any good end : yet are such men part of their sacred persons. What their acts are we know not, their instruments we know ; but what the stage presents we know, and what the whores present : yet there is no use of eunuch nor Pathic : yet of obscene and filthy persons there is : for

honest men ought not to act them. But what sacrifices are these (think you) that require such ministers for the more sanctity as are not admitted, no not even in Thymelian bawdery.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the natural interpretations which the Paynim doctors pretend for their gods.

AYE, but these things (say they) are all to be interpreted naturally and physiologically. Good, as though we were in quest of physiology and not of theology, as if we sought nature and set God aside. For though the true God be God in nature and not in opinion only, yet is not all nature God; for men, beasts, birds, trees and stones, have each a nature that is no deity. But if your interpretation of the mother of the gods be, that she is the earth, what need we seek further: what do they say more, than say all your gods were mortal men? For as the earth is the mother, so are they earth's children: but refer his sacrifices to what nature you can, for men to suffer women's effects is not according but contrary to nature. Thus this crime, this disease, this shame is professed in her sacrifices, that the vilest wretch living would scarcely confess by tortures. Again if these ceremonies, so much fouler than all stage obscenity, have their natural interpretations for their defence; why should not the like pretended excuse be sufficient for the fictions poetical? They interpret much in the same manner: so that in that it is counted so horrid a thing to say that Saturn devoured his sons: they have expounded it thus, that length of time, signified by Saturn's name, consumes all things it produces: or as Varro interprets it, that Saturn belongs to the seeds, which being produced by the earth, are entombed in it again: others give other senses, and so of the rest. Yet is this called fabulous theology, and cast out, scorned and excluded for all the expositions; and because of the unworthy fictions, expelled both from coherence with the natural and philosophical kind, as also with the civil and political. Because indeed, the judicious and learned compilers hereof, saw both the fabulous and the politic worthy reprehension; but they durst not reprove this as they might do the other. That, they made culpable, and this they made comparable with that, not to prefer either before other, but to show them both fit to be rejected alike: and so having turned them both out of credit without incurring the danger of openly condemning the latter: the third, the natural kind, might get the less place in men's opinions. For the civil and the fabulous are both fabulous and both civil; both fabulous, witness he that observes their obscenities; both civil, witness he that observes their

confusing them together in plays and sacrifices. How then can the power of eternity lie in their hands whom their own statues and sacrifices do prove to be like those fabulous rejected gods, in form, age, sex, habit, descent, ceremonies, etc. In all which they either are convicted of mortality, and attaining those erroneous honours by the devil's assistance, in or after their life or death; or else that they were true devils themselves that could catch all occasions of filling men's hearts with error's contagion.

CHAPTER IX.

Of the offices of each peculiar god.

WHAT say you to the absurd numerical division of the gods' charges, where each one must have prayers made to him for that which he commands? (of these we have recited part but not all): is it not more like a scene of scurrility than a lecture of divinity? If a man should set two nurses to look to his child, one for the meat, and another for the drink, as they do two goddesses, Educa and Potina, he should be taken for a *cumane* ass, or a *mimical* fool. And then they have a Liber, that lets loose the masculine sperm in men, at carnal copulation, and one Libera for the women, whom they hold Venus (for women, they say, do let forth sperm also), and therefore they dedicate a man's privy member to Liber, and a woman's to Libera: besides wine and women they subject unto Liber, as the provokers of lust: and in such mad manner keep they their Bacchanalian feasts: where Varro confesses that the Bacchæ, women, could not possibly do such things unless they were mad, yet the Senate being grown wiser, disliked and abolished these sacrifices. It may be here they descried the power of the devils in such men's minds as held them to be gods. Truly this could not have been upon the stage: there the players are never mad, though it be a kind of madness to honour the gods that delight in such gracelessness. But what a strange distinction has he of the religious and the superstitious, that the latter do stand in fear of the gods, and the first do but reverence them as parents, not fearing them as foes: and to call all the gods so good that they will far sooner spare the guilty than hurt the guiltless: and yet for all this the woman in child-bed must have three gods to look to her after her deliverance, lest Sylvanus come in the night and torment her: in signification whereof, three men must go about the house in the night, and first strike the thresholds with an hatchet, then with a pestle, and then sweep them with besoms, that by these signs of worship, they may keep Sylvanus out: because the trees are not pruned without iron, nor corn is not made into meal without pestles; nor the fruits swept up together without besoms: from these three acts, three gods got names: Intercidona, of the hatchet's cutting, *intercisio*; Pilumnus, of *pilum*, the

pestle or mortar : Deverra, of *verro*, to sweep : and these kept Sylvanus from the woman in bed. Thus were they fain to have three good against one bad, or all had been too little : and these three must with their handsome neat culture, oppose his rough, savage brutishness. Is this your gods' innocence ? is this their concord ? Are these your saving city deities, far more ridiculous than your stage gods ? When man and woman are wed together, god Jugatinus has to do : nay that is tolerable. When the bride must be led home, god Domiducus look to your charge : now who must keep her at home ? god Domitius : aye, but who must make her stay with her husband ? why that can goddess Manturna do. Oh why proceed we further ! spare, spare, man's chaster ears : let carnal effect and shame-faced secrecy give end to the rest ! What does all that crew of gods in the bridal chamber upon the departure of the *paranymphs*, the feast-masters. Oh sir, not to make the woman more shame-faced by their being present but because she is weak and timorous, to help her to lose her virginity with less difficulty. For there is goddess Virginensis, god Subigus, goddess Prema, goddess Partunda, and Venus, and Priapus. If the man stood in need of help in this business, why were not one of them sufficient to help him ? Would not Venus' power serve, who they said was so called because virginity could not be lost without her help ? If there be any shame in man, that is not in the gods, when the married couple shall think that so many gods of both sexes do stand by at their carnal conjunction, and have their hands in this business, will not he be less forward and she more froward ? If Virginensis be there to loose the virgin girdle, Subigus to subject her under the man, and Prema to press her down from moving after the act, what shall Partunda have to do but blush and get her out of doors, and leave the husband to do his business. For it were very dishonest for any one to fulfil her name upon the bride but he. But perhaps they allow her presence because she is a female. If she were a male and called Partundus, the husband would call more protectors of his wife's honesty against him, than the child-bearing woman doth against Sylvanus. But what talk I of this, when Priapus (that unreasonable male) is there upon whose huge and beastly member : the new bride was commanded (after a most honest, old and religious order observed by the matrons) to get up and sit ! Now, now let them go, and cashier their fabulous theology from the political, the theatre from the city, the stage from the temple, the poets' verses from the priests' documents, as turpitude from honesty, falsehood from truth, lightness from gravity, foolery from seriousness ! Now let them use all the subtle art they can in it ! We know what they do that understand the dependence of the fabulous theology upon the civil, and that from the poets' verses it redounds to the city again as an image from a glass, and therefore they, not daring to condemn the civil kind, present the

image thereof and that they spare not to spit true disgrace upon, that as many as can conceive them, may loathe the thing that shape presents and resembles : which the gods notwithstanding behold with such pleasure, that that very delight of theirs betrays their damned essences ; and therefore by terrible means have they wrung these stage-honours from their servants in the sacrifices : manifesting hereby that themselves were most unclean spirits, and making that abject, reprobate, and absurd stage-divinity a part of this civil kind that was held selected and approved, that all of it being nought but a lump of absurdity framed of such false gods as never were, one part of it might be preserved in the priests' writings, and another in the poets'. Now whether it have more parts is another question. As for Varro's division, I think I have made it plain enough that the divinity of the stage and the city belong both to that one political kind : and seeing they are both markable with the like brands of foul, false and unworthy impiety, far be it from religious men to expect eternal life from either of them. Lastly, Varro himself reckons his gods from man's original, beginning with Janus, and so proceeds through man's life to his age, and death, ending with Nænia, a goddess whose verses were sung at old men's funerals. And then he mentions gods that concern not man, but his accidents, as apparel, meat, and such necessities of life, showing what each only could, and consequently what one should ask of each one. In which universal diligence of his he never showed whom to ask eternal life of, for which only it is that we are Christians. Who is therefore so dull, that he conceives not that this man in his diligent discovery of political divinity, and his direct and apparent comparison of it with the fabulous kind, and his plain affirmation that this fabulous kind was a part of the civil, desired only to get a place for the natural kind (which he called the philosophers' kind) in the minds of men? Fully reprehending the fabulous kind, but not daring meddle with the civil, only show it subject to reprehension, so that it being excluded together with the fabulous, the natural kind might have sole place in the elections of all good understandings. Of which kind, God willing, I mean to speak more peculiarly and fully in place convenient.

CHAPTER X.

Of Seneca's freer reprehension of the civil theology, than Varro's was of the fabulous.

BUT the liberty that this man wanted in reprehending that civil divinity which was so like to the stages, Anneus Seneca (whom some proofs confirm to have lived in the apostles' times) wanted it not fully, though in part he did : in his works written he had it, but in his life he lacked

it. For in his book against superstitions, far more free is he in beating down the political kind of theology, than Varro was against the poetical. For speaking of images, the immortal and sacred gods (says he) do they consecrate in a vile, dead, and dejected substance, confining them to shapes of men, beasts, fishes, and ambiguous monster-like creatures: calling them deities; which if one should meet alive were monsters and prodigies. And a little after, speaking of natural divinity, having rejected some opinions, proposes himself a question thus: shall I believe (says one) that heaven and earth are gods, that there are some under the moon, and some above it? shall I respect Plato, or Strato the peripatetic, while this makes God without a soul, and that without a body? Answering then to the question: what then says he? do you think there is more truth in the dreams of Romulus, Tatius, or Tullus Hostilius? Tatius dedicated goddess Cloacinia, Romulus, Picus and Tiberinus: Hostilius, Fear and Paleness, two extreme affects of man: the one being a perturbation of an affrighted mind, the other of the body: not a disease but a colour. Are these more like gods, inhabitants of heaven? And of their cruel and obscene ceremonies, how freely did he strike at them? One gelds himself, another cuts off his torn parts: and this is their propitiation for the god's anger: but no worship at all ought they to have that delight in such as this is. The fury and disturbance of mind in some is raised to that height by seeking to appease the gods, that not the most barbarous and recorded tyrants would desire to behold it. Tyrants indeed have rent off the parts of some men, but never made them their own tormentors. Some have been gelded for their princes' lust: but never commanded to be their own gelders. But these kill themselves in the temples, offering their vows in blood and wounds. If one had time to take interview of their actions, he should see them do things so unbeseeming honesty, so unworthy of freedom, and so unlike to soberness, that none would make question of their madness, if they were fewer: but now their multitude is their privilege. And then the capital tricks that he records, and fearlessly inveighs at, who would not hold them mad ones, or mockeries? For first in the losing of Osiris in the Egyptian sacrifices, and then in the finding him again, first the sorrow and then their great joy, all this is a puppetry and a fiction, yet the fond people though they find not nor lose anything, weep, for all that, and rejoice again as heartily as if they had: aye but this madness has its time. It is tolerable (says he) to be but once a year mad. But come into the Capitol, and you will shame at the mad acts of public *furor*. One sets the gods under their king, another tells Jove what o'clock it is, another is his sergeant, and another makes a rubbing of him as if he anointed him. Others dress Juno and Minerva's hair, standing afar off the temple, not only of the image, and tricking with their fingers as if they

were combing and crisping it : another holds the glass, and another bids the gods to be his advocates. Some present them with scrolls, and propound their causes to them. One old archplayer played the mimic continually in the Capitol, as if the gods had found great sport in him whom the world had rejected. Nay, there you have all trades work to the gods : and a little after : but these though they be idle before the gods, yet they are not bawdy, or offensive. But some sit there, that think Jove is in love with them : never respecting Juno's poetically supposed terrible aspect. This freedom Varro durst not assume, he durst go no farther than theology poetical : but not to the civil which this man crushes in sunder. But if we mark the truth, the temples where these things are done, are worse than the theatres where they are but feigned. And therefore Seneca selects those parts of this civil theology for a wise man to observe in his actions, but not to make a religion of. "A wise man," says he, "will observe these as commands of the laws, not as the pleasures of the gods ;" and again : "We can make marriages, nay and those unlawful ones, amongst the gods, joining brother and sister : Mars and Bellona, Vulcan and Venus : Neptune and Salacia : yet some we leave single, as wanting means of the bargain, chiefly some being widows, as Populonia, Fulgura, and Rumina, nor wonder if these want suitors." But this rabble of base gods forged by inveterate superstition, we will adore (says he) rather for law's sake than for religion's, or any other respect. So that neither law nor custom gave induction to those things either as grateful to the gods or useful unto men. But this man whom the philosophers made as free, yet being a great senator of Rome, worshipped that he disavowed, professed that he condemned, and adored that he accused : because his philosophy had taught him this great matter, not to be superstitious in the world, but for law and custom's sake, to imitate those things in the temple, but not act them in the theatre : so much the more damnably, because that which he counterfeited, he did it so, that the people thought he had not counterfeited : but the player rather delighted them with sport, than wronged them with deceit.

CHAPTER XI.

Seneca's opinion of the Jews.

THIS man amongst his other invectives against the superstitions of politic theology condemns also the Jews' sacrifices, chiefly their Sabbaths : saying that by their seventh day interposed, they spend the seventh part of their lives in idleness, and hurt themselves by not taking divers things in their time. Yet dares he not meddle with the Christians (though then the Jews' deadly foes) upon either hand, lest he should praise them against his country's old custom, or dispraise them

perhaps against his own conscience. Speaking of the Jews, he says: "the custom of that wicked nation getting head through all the world, the vanquished gave laws to the vanquishers." This he admired, not knowing the work of the godhead. But his opinion of their sacraments he subscribes. They know the cause of their ceremonies (says he) but most of the people do they know not what. But of the Jewish sacrifices how far God's institutions first directed them, and then how by the men of God that had the mystery of eternity revealed to them, they were by the same authority abolished, we have both elsewhere spoken chiefly against the Manichees, and in this work in convenient place mean to say somewhat more.

CHAPTER XII.

That it is plain by this discovery of the Pagan gods' vanity, that they cannot give eternal life, having not power to help in the temporal.

Now for the three theologies, mythical, physical, and political: or fabulous, natural, and civil: that the life eternal is neither to be expected from the fabulous, for that the Pagans themselves reject and reprehend, nor from the civil, for that is proved but a part of the other: if this be not sufficient to prove, let that be added which the forepassed books contain, chiefly the four concerning the giver of happiness: for if Felicity were a goddess, to whom should one go for eternal life but to her? But being none, but a gift of God, to what god must we offer ourselves, but to the giver of that felicity, for that eternal and true happiness which we so entirely affect? But let no man doubt that none of those filth-adored gods can give it: those that are more filthily angry unless that worship be given them in that manner, and herein proving themselves direct devils: what is said I think is sufficient to prove this. Now he that cannot give felicity, how can he give eternal life? eternal life, we call endless felicity, for if the soul live eternally in pains, as the devils do, that is rather eternal death. For there is no death so sore nor sure, as that which never ends. But the soul being of that immortal nature, that it cannot but live some way, therefore the greatest death it can endure is the deprivation of it from glory, and constitution in endless punishment. So he only gives eternal life (that is, endlessly happy) that gives true felicity. Which since the politic gods cannot give, as is proved: they are not to be adored for their benefits of this life, as we showed in our first five precedent books: and much less for life eternal, as this last book of all, by their own helps has convinced. But if any man think (because old customs keep fast roots) that we have not shown cause sufficient for the rejecting of their politic theology, let him peruse the next book, which by the assistance of God I intend shall immediately follow this former.



THE SEVENTH BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

Whether divinity be to be found in the select gods, since it is not extant in the politic theology.

WHEREAS I employ my most diligent endeavour about the extirpation of inveterate and depraved opinions, which the continuance of error has deeply rooted in the hearts of mortal men: and whereas I work by that grace of God (who as the true God is able to bring this work to effect) according to my poor talent: the quick and apprehensive spirits that have drawn full satisfaction from the works precedent, must bear my proceedings with pardon, and patience: and not think my subsequent discourse to be superfluous unto others because it is needless unto them. The affirmation that divinity is not to be sought for terrestrial uses (though thence we must desire all earthly supplies that we need) but for the celestial glory which is alone eternal, is a great matter. This divinity, or, let me say deity; for this word our Christians have now in use as expressly traduced from the Greek *θεϊότης*. This divinity therefore or deity is not in that politic theology which M. Varro discourses of in his sixteen books: that is, the worship of any god there expressed will not yield to man eternal life: he that will not be persuaded this is true, out of our sixth book last finished, when he has read this, I believe shall not find any point of this question left undiscussed: for some perhaps may think that the selected gods of Varro's last book (whereof we said somewhat) and none but they are to be honoured for this eternal beatitude. I say not herein as Tertullian said, with more conceit perhaps than truth: if the gods be chosen like scullions, then the rest are counted wicked. This I say not, for I see that out of an elected sort, another particular election may be made: as out of a company of elected soldiers one is elected for this office in arms and another for one not so weighty: and in the church, when the elders are elected, the others are not held reprobate: being all God's

good faithful elect. In architecture, corner and foundation stones are chosen, yet the rest are not refused but will fit other places. Grapes are chosen to eat: but they are not worth nought which we leave for wine. The matter is plain and needs no farther process. Wherefore neither the gods nor their servants are faulty, in that they are selected from many: but let us rather look what the selected are, and what is the end of their selection.

CHAPTER II.

The selected gods, and whether they be exempted from the baser gods' functions.

THOSE selected gods, Varro commends in one whole book, and these are Janus, Jove, Saturn, Genius, Mercury, Apollo, Mars, Vulcan, Neptune, Sol, Orcus, Liber Pater, Tellus, Ceres, Juno, Luna, Diana, Minerva, Venus, and Vesta. In these twenty are twelve males and eight females. Now whether are they called select, for their principal charges in the world, or for that they were more known and adored than the rest? if because of their greater charges, then may they not come to meddle in the petty businesses of the baser gods. But at the conception of the child, whence all those petty gods' charges arise, Janus is making fit receipt for the seed; Saturn has business in the seed also; Liber is making the man's seed flow abundantly; and Libera, whom they say is Venus, she is working the like in the woman: all these are of your selected gods. But then there is Mena, the goddess of the female flux, a daughter of Jove, but yet a base one. And this sway in the flux, he gives to Juno also, in his book of the select ones amongst whom she is queen: and here as Juno Lucina, together with her step-daughter Mena, rule both one blood. And then there are two obscure fellows (of gods), Vitumnus and Sentinus, one gives vital breath, and another sense to the child begotten. These two base gods do more service here than all the other great selected gods, for what is all that they heap together in the woman's womb, without life and sense, but as a lump of clay and dust.

CHAPTER III.

That these gods' elections are without all reason, since that baser gods have nobler charges.

BUT why does he call so many of the selected gods to this charge, and then Vitumnus and Sentinus get the principal offices of all the rest? Select Janus, he makes way for the seed: select Saturn, he brings it:

select Liber, he puts it freely forth ; and so does Libera, be she Ceres or Venus, to the women ; select Juno, with her daughter Mena's help, brings flux of blood to nourish the birth. But base Vitumnus, he brings life to it : obscure Sentinus, he gives it sense. Which two gifts are as far above the rest, as they are short of reason. For as the reasonable creature excels that which is but only sensitive as the beast : so the sensitive must needs excel that which has neither sense nor life. So that Vitumnus, the quickener, and Sentinus, the sense-giver, had more reason to be selected, than either Janus, the seed-giver, Saturn, the giver, or Liber and Libera, the losers : which seed it were unworthy to imagine, unless it were animated and made sensitive : which select gifts the select gods give not, but only a couple of poor obscure fellows that must stand at the door when these are let in. If they reply, Janus is god of all beginnings, and therefore justly opens the womb : Saturn, of all seed, and therefore justly works in the man's sowing of it : Liber and Libera, of the distillation of seed in all spermatical creatures, and therefore must work in this dispersing of man's : Juno, of all births and purgations, and therefore justly must have a hand in the woman's at this time : well what of Vitumnus and Sentinus, have they dominion over all things living and sensitive : if it be granted, then see how these two are advanced. For seeds to grow on earth is earth's nature : but to live and have sense, that comes from the gods of the stars, they say. But if they say that these two have sway only over fleshly sensitives ; why then could not he that gives sense to fishes and all things else, give flesh sense also, and extend his general power through each peculiar ? what need then of Vitumnus and Sentinus ? If he that rules life and sense, rule all things else, and gave the charge of fleshly sensitives to these his two servants, as a place of no credit : kept these selected gods so few attendants, that they could not commit the said base offices to some of their followers, but must debase all (their cause of selection) their nobility to be joined fellow-workmen with such a base couple ? Nay, Juno, the selected queen of all the selected, Jove's wife and sister, yet is Interduca to the children, and works with a couple of base goddesses, Adeona and Abeona. And there is goddess Mens, that sends the child a good mind, she is not select, and yet how can a greater gift be given to man ? Now Juno plays Interduca and Domiduca, as though it were such a matter to make a journey or to come well home, if one be not in his right mind : yet the goddess of this good gift was none of the select. Truly she deserved it before Minerva that had charge of the child's memory in this quarterings of duties. For who doubts that it is better to have a good mind, than a memory never so capable ? for he that has a good mind is never evil. But many wicked men have admirable memories, and are so much worse because they cannot forget their evil cogitations. Yet

is Minerva selected. And for Virtue and Felicity (of whom our fourth book treats), those goddesses they had, but never selected them, whilst Mars and Orcus, the one the causer of death, and the other the receiver, these were selected. Seeing therefore that in these worthless affairs, shared amongst so many, the patrician and plebeian god, work all together in huggermugger: and that some gods that were not held worthy of selection, had more honourable charges in the business, than the selected: it rests to believe, that their being known to the vulgar more than the other, and not their bearing charge above the other, put in their names into this bill of selection. And therefore Varro himself says, that many father-gods and mother-goddesses were grown ignoble, like mortal men. If therefore Felicity be not to be placed amongst those selects, because they got their places rather by chance than by desert: yet surely Fortune should be one amongst them, or rather above them, who gives not her gifts by reason, but ever casually, as it falls out. She of right should have been their chief, as showing her power chiefly upon them; when as we see it was no virtue nor reasonable felicity of theirs but only the power of fortune (as all their adorers do believe) that made them be selected. For witty Sallust it may be, excluded not the gods when he said, "Fortune ruleth in everything: disposing of them according to her will rather than unto truth." For they can show no reason why Venus should be famous and Virtue obscure, seeing both are made goddesses, and their merits are not comparable. If Venus deserved her enhancement in this, that more affect her than Virtue, why then is Minerva famous and Lady Money obscure, seeing that in all sorts of men there is more love coin than knowledge? and even in the arts, you shall not find one but it is set to sale, and still there is more respect to that which respects other ends than to that which other ends do most respect. If therefore the fond vulgar were the selectors, why was not Money put before Minerva, since all their trades aim at money? But if the wise men selected them, why was Venus preferred before Virtue, which all reason will of right prefer? Certainly, as I said, if Fortune (who, as they think, that think her so powerful) rules in everything (disposing them rather according to her lust and liking than to right or reason), had so much power over the gods, that she could advance and obscure whom she list, then should the first place of the selected of right have been hers, that had such authority over the state of the gods. But may we not think that Fortune was Fortune's own foe, and so kept her from the place? Sure it was so: she was her own foe, that could give advancements to others, and took none herself.

CHAPTER IV.

That the meaner gods being buried in silence were better used than the select, whose faults were so shamefully traduced.

Now anyone that longed after honour might gratulate those selected gods and say their selection had been good if it had not rather been used to their disgrace than their honours, for the baseness of the meaner sort kept them from scorn. Indeed, we do laugh when we see how fond opinion has parted them into squadrons, and set them to work upon trifles like spittle men,¹ or the gold-finish in the silver street, where the cup goes through so many hands ere it be done, when as one good workman might do all himself. But I think they had each such little shares, to learn their work the sooner, lest the whole should have been too long in learning. But we can scarcely find one of the unselected gods that is become infamous by any foul act doing : but scarcely one of the select, but on the contrary. The latter came down belike to the base works of the first, but the first ascended not to the high crimes of the latter. Indeed, of Janus I find nothing blameworthy : perhaps he lived honestly and out of the rank of villains, he received Saturn courteously, being expelled his kingdom, and shared his state with him, and they built two cities, the one Janiculum, the other Saturnia. But those senseless adorers of idolatry and filthiness, have made him a very monster : sometimes with two faces, sometimes with four. Did they desire that since the other gods had lost all honesty of face by their foul act, his innocence should be the more apparent by his many foreheads ?

CHAPTER V.

Of the Pagans' more abstruse physiological doctrine.

BUT let us rather hear their natural expositions, wherewith they would seem to cloak their piteous errors as in cloudy mysteries. First, Varro so commends them, that he says the pictures, shapes, and vestures of the gods were erected of old for the devout, therein to contemplate the world's soul, and the parts thereof, that is, the true God's, in their minds : whereof such as erected human shapes, seemed to compare the immortal essence unto the soul in man, and as if the vessel should be put for the thing itself, and a flagon set in Liber's temple, to signify wine, taking the containant for the contained : so by that human shape, the reasonable soul in the like included might be expressed, of which nature they say that god, or the gods are. These are the mystical

¹ Men who had the gathering of small collections.

doctrines which his sharp wit went deep into, and so delivered. But tell me, thou acute man, hast thou lost that judgment in these mysteries that made thee say, that they that first made images, freed the city from all awe, and added error to error, and that the old Romans served the gods in better order without any statues at all? They were thy authors for that thou spakest against their successors. For had they had statues also, perhaps fear would have made thee have suppressed thy opinion of abolishing images, and have made thee have sought further for these vain mythologies and figments: for thy soul, so learned and so ingenious (which we much bewail in thee) by being so ungrateful to that God (by whom, not with whom it was made: nor was a part of Him but a thing made by Him, Who is not the life of all things, but all life's maker) could never come to His knowledge by these mysteries. But of what nature and worth they are, let us see. Meantime this learned man affirms the world's soul entirely to be truly God, so that all his theology being natural, extends itself even to the nature of the reasonable soul. Of this natural kind he speaks briefly in his book whence we have this: wherein we must see whether all his mystical wrestlings can bring the natural to the civil, of which he discourses in his last book of the select gods: if he can, all shall be natural. And then what need he be so careful in their distinction? But if they be rightly divided, seeing that the natural that he likes so of is not true (for he comes but to the soul, not to God that made the soul), how much more is the civil kind untrue and subject, that is, all corporal and conversant about the body, as his own interpretations being diligently called out, shall (by my rehearsal) make most apparent.

CHAPTER VI.

Of Varro's opinion that God was the soul of the world, and yet had many souls under Him in His parts, all which were of the divine nature.

THE same Varro, speaking further of this physical theology, says, that he holds God to be the soul of the world, which the Greeks call *κόσμος*, and that this world is God. But as a whole man, body and soul, is called wise of the soul only, so is the world called God in respect of the soul only, being both soul and body. Here (seemingly) he confesses one God, but it is to bring in more, for so he divides the world into heaven and earth: heaven into the air and the sky, earth into land and water: all which four parts he fills with souls, the sky highest, the air next, then the water, and then the earth: the souls of the first two he makes immortal, the latter mortal. The space between the highest

heaven and the moon he fills with souls ethereal and stars, affirming that they both are and seem celestial gods: between the moon and the tops of the winds he bestows airy souls, but invisible (save to the mind) calling them Heroes, Lares, and Genii. This he briefly records in his prologue to his natural theology, which pleased not him alone, but many philosophers more: whereof with God's help we will discourse at full, when we handle the civil theology as it respects the select gods.

CHAPTER VII.

Whether it stand with reason that Janus and Terminus should be two gods.

JANUS, therefore, whom I begun with, what is he? The world. Why this is a plain and brief answer: but why has he the rule and beginnings then, and another (one Terminus) of the ends? For therefore they have two months dedicated to them, January to Janus, and February to Terminus. And so the *terminalia* are then kept, when the purgatory sacrifice called *Februm* was also kept, whence the month has the name: doth then the beginning of things belong to the world, to Janus, and not the end, but unto another? Are not all things beginning in the world to have their end also therein? What fondness is this, to give him but half a power, and yet a double face? were it not better to call that double-faced statue both Janus and Terminus, and to give the beginnings one face and the ends to another, because he that does an act must respect both? For in all actions he that regards not the beginning foreseeth not the end. So that a respective memory and a memorative providence must of force go together. But if they imagine that blessedness of life is but begun and not ended in this world, and that therefore the world (Janus) is to have but power of the beginnings: why then they should put Terminus amongst the selected gods before him: for though they were both employed about one subject, yet Terminus should have the better place; for the glory is in the conclusion of every act, and the beginnings are full of doubt and fear till they be brought to perfection, which every one at his beginning of an act does desire, intend, and expect, nor joys he in the beginning, but in the consummation of his intents.

CHAPTER VIII.

Why the worshippers of Janus made him two faces, and yet would have him set forth with four also.

BUT now to the meaning of Janus' two faces. Two he had (say they), one before, another behind, because when we gape, our mouth is like

the world, and therefore the Greek called the palate οὐρανός, heaven. And some Latin poets have called the palate *cælum*, heaven also : from whence is a way outward, to the teeth, and inward to the throat. See now to what a pass the world is come, for your Greek or poetical name of the palate. What is all this to life eternal? or the soul? here is God's worship all bestowed, for a little spittle to spit out, or swallow down, as the gates shall open or shut. But who is so foolish that cannot find in the world two contrary passages, whereat one may enter in or out? but of our mouth and throat (whose like is not in the world) must frame the similitude of the world in Janus, only for the palate, whose similitude is not in Janus. And whereas they make him four faces, calling his statue double Janus, these they attribute to the four corners of the world, as if the world's four corners looked all forward, as his four faces do. Again, if Janus be the world, and the world consist of four parts, then the picture of two-faced Janus is false (for though he be four-faced sometimes, yet he never hath four gates). Or if the two-faced picture be true, because east and west include usually all the world, will any man when we name the north and the south, call the world double, as they do Janus with his four faces? nor have they any similitude in the world correspondent to their four gates of ingress and egress; as they have found for the two faces in the mouth of a man: unless Neptune come with a fifth, there indeed in his mouth is a passage in and a passage out, and ways forth on either side his chaps. But of all these ways there is none leads any soul from vanity, but such as hear the truth say, "I am the way."¹

CHAPTER IX.

Of Jove's power and Janus's compared together.

BUT let them tell us now whom they mean by Jove or Jupiter. He is a god (quoth they) that rules the causes of all effects in the world. This is a great charge. Ask Virgil's excellent verse else—

"Fœlix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas."

'O blessed he, and excellent, that kens the cause of each event.'

But why then is Janus preferred before him? let the great absolute scholar speak. Because, says he, "Janus rules the first things, and Jove the greatest." Why then Jove is still worthy of the superiority: the greatest things control the first: and excel them in dignity though they be short of them in time. If the beginnings, and the excellencies of all acts be compared together, this is true: to go is the beginning of an

¹ John x.

act; but to finish the journey is the perfection. To begin to learn, is another, but the habit of learning is the excellence; and so in all things, the beginning is the first, and the end the best. But the cause of Janus and Terminus is already heard. But the causes that Jove sways are not effects, but efficient: nor can the facts begun or ended be before them, for the agent is always before the act. Wherefore let Janus have sway in beginnings of acts, Jove yet has dominion in things before his. For nothing is either ended or begun without a precedent efficient cause. Now as for this great nature's master and cause-disposing god, if the vulgar call him Jove, and adore him with such horrible imputations of villainy as they do, they had better, and with less sacrilege, believe no god at all. They had better call any one Jove that were worthy of these horrid and hateful horrors, or set a stock before them and call it Jove, with intent to blaspheme him (as Saturn had a stone laid him, to devour in his son's stead), than to call him "both thunderer, and letcher, the world's ruler, and the women's ravisher, the giver of all good causes to nature, and the receiver of all bad in himself." Again, if Janus be the world, I ask where Jove's seat is? our author has said that the true gods are but parts of the world's soul, and the soul itself: well then he that is not such, is no true god. How then? Is Jove the world's soul, and Janus the body, that is, this visible world? If it be so, Janus is no god, for the world's body is none: but the soul and his parts only, witness themselves. So Varro says plainly, he holds that god is the world's soul, and this soul is god: but as a wise man has body and soul, and yet his name of *wise* is only in respect of his soul. So the world has soul and body, yet is called god only in reference to the soul. So then the world's body alone is no god: but the soul, either separate or combined with the body, yet so that the godhead rest only in itself: if Janus then be the world and a god; how can Jove be a part of Janus only, and yet so great a god? for they give more to Jove than Janus, "Jovis omnia plena;" 'all is full of Jove,' say they. Therefore if Jove be a god, and the king of gods, they cannot make any but him to be the world, because he must reign over the rest, as over his own parts. To this purpose Varro in his book of the worship of the gods, which he published separate from these other, set down a distich of Valerius Soranus' making: it is this—

"Jupiter omnipotens regum, rex ipse deusque,
Progenitor, genitrixque deum, deus unus et omnis."

'High Jove, kings' King, and parent general,
To all the gods: God only, and God all.'

These verses Varro expounds, and calling the giver of seed, the male, and the receiver the female, accounted Jove the world, that both gives all seed itself, and receives it unto itself. And therefore Soranus (says

he) call Jove, "Progenitor, genitrixque," father and mother, "Full parent general, to all," &c., and by the same reason is it that he was called, one and the same, all: for the world is one, and all things are in that one.

CHAPTER X.

Whether Janus and Jove be rightly distinguished or no.

WHEREFORE Janus being the world, and Jove the world also, and yet the world but one, why then are not Janus and Jove one? Why have they several temples, several altars, rites and statues all several? Because the original is one thing and the cause another, and therefore their names and natures are distinct herein? Why, how can this be? If one man have two authorities, or two sciences, because they are distinct, is he therefore two officers, or two tradesmen? So then if one god have two powers over causes, and over originals, must he needs therefore be two gods, because they are two things? If this may be said, then let Jove be as many gods as he has surnames for his several authorities, for all his powers, whence they are derived, are truly distinct: let us look at a few of them, and see if this be not true.

CHAPTER XI.

Of Jove's surnames, referred all unto him, as one god, not as to many.

THEY called him Victor, Invincible, Helper, Impulsor, Stator, Hundred-footed, Supinal, the Rafter, the Nourisher, Ruminous, and innumerable other names too long to rehearse. All the names they gave one god for divers respect and powers, yet did they not make him a god for each peculiar, because he conquered, was unconquered, helped the needy, had power to enforce, to stay, to establish, to overturn, because he bore up the world like a rafter, because he nourished all, and as it were gave all the world suck. Mark these powers conferred with the epithets: some are of worth, some idle; yet one god's work they are all, as they say. I think there is more nearness of nature between the causes and the beginnings of things, for which they make one world two gods, Janus and Jove, who (they say) both contain all, and yet give creatures suck: yet for these two works of such different qualities, is not Jove compelled to become two gods, but plays the one part as he is Tigillus the Rafter, and the other as he is in Ruminus, the Dugg-bearer. I will not say that it were more fit for Jove to suckle the world's creatures than Jupiter, especially having power to make a waiting-maid of goddess

Rumina : for it may be they will reply : Why, Juno is nothing but Jupiter, as Soranus says :—

“ Jupiter omnipotens regum, rerumque deumque
Progenitor, genetrixque deorum.”——

He is god only and god all : but why is he called Ruminus then, when if you look a little further into him, you shall find him to be Rumina the goddess, for if it seem justly unworthy of the majesty of the gods, to set one to look to the knot of the corn, and another to the blade, how much more is it unreverently ridiculous to put a base office, the suckling of whelps, lambs, calves, or so, unto the performance of two gods, the one whereof is Lord of the whole universe : aye, and not this neither with his wife, but with a base goddess, I cannot tell whom Rumina, unless he be both Ruminus and Rumina, this for the females, and that for the males, for I dare say that they would not have given Jove a female name, but that he is called a father and a mother, or a full parent generally in the said verses. Nay, I find him also named Pecunia, a name of one of the shake-rag goddesses in our fourth book. But since men and women both have money, why is he not Pecunius and Pecunia as well as Ruminus and Rumina ; but let them look to that.

CHAPTER XII.

That Jupiter is called Pecunia also.

BUT do you hear their reason for this name ? He is called Pecunia (say they), coin, because he can do all things. O fine reason for a name of a god ! Nay, he that does all things is basely injured that is called Pecunia, coin. For what is that which all mortal men possess under the name of coin, or money, in respect of the things contained in heaven and earth ? But avarice gave him this name, that he that loved money might say his god was not everybody, but the king of all the rest. Far more reason therefore had they to call him riches : for riches and money are two several things. Wise, just, and honest men we call rich, though they have little or no money, for they are the richer in virtues : which make little suffice them for necessities, whereas the greedy, covetous man that always gapes after money, him we count ever poor and needy. Such may have store of money, but therein they shall never lack store of want. And God, we say well, is rich, not in money, but in omnipotency. So likewise, moneyed men are called rich, but be they greedy, they are ever needy, and moneyless men are called poor, but be they contented, they are ever wealthy. What stuff then shall a man have of that divinity, whose scope and chief God no wise man in the

world would make choice of? How much likelier were it (if their religion in any point concerned eternal life) to call their chief universal god Wisdom, the love of which cleans one from the stains of avarice, that is, the love of money.

CHAPTER XIII.

That the interpretations of Saturn and Genius, prove them both to be Jupiter.

BUT what should we do saying more of Jupiter; to whom all the other gods have such relation, that the opinion of many gods will by and by prove a Babel, and Jove stand for them all, whether they be taken as his parts and powers, or that the soul that they hold is diffused through all the world: got itself so many diverse names by the manifold operations which it effected in the parts of this huge mass, whereof the visible universe has the fabric and composition? for what is this same Saturn? A chief god (says he) and one that is lord of all seeds and sowing. What? but does not the exposition of Soranus' verses say that Jove is the world, and both creator and conceiver of all seeds? He therefore must needs rule the sowing of them. And what is Genius? God of generation (says he). Why tell me, has any one that power, but the world, to whom it was said, "High Jove, full parent general of all"? Besides, he says in another place, that the Genius is the reasonable soul, peculiar in each peculiar man. And that the soul of the world is a god of the same nature, drawing it to this, that that soul is the universal Genius to all those particulars. Why then, it is the same that they call Jove. For if each Genius be a god, and each soul reasonable a Genius, then is each soul reasonable a god by all consequence, which such absurdity urges them to deny, it rests that they make the world's singular soul their selected Genius, and consequently make their Genius directly Jove.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of the functions of Mars and Mercury.

BUT in all the world's parts they could find never a corner for Mars and Mercury to practise in the elements, and therefore they gave them power in men's actions, this of eloquence, and the other of war. Now for Mercury, if he have power of the gods' language also, then is he their king, if Jupiter borrow all his phrase from him: but this were absurd. But his power stretches but unto man's only, it is unlikely

that Jove would take such a base charge in hand as suckling of not only children, but cattle also, calves or foals, as thence he has his name Ruminus, and leave the rule of our speech (so glorious a thing and that wherein we excel the beasts) unto the sway of another, his inferior. Aye, but how if Mercury be the speech only itself, for so they interpret him: and therefore he is called Mercurius, *quasi medius currens*, the mean current, because to speak is the only current mean for one man to express his mind to another by, and his Greek name ἑρμῆς, is nothing but interpreter and *speech*, or *interpretation*, which is called in Greek also, ἑρμηνεία, and thence is he lord of merchants, because buying and selling is all by words and discourses. Hereupon they wing his head and his feet, to signify the swift passage of speech, and call him the messenger, because all messages and thoughts whatsoever are transported from man to man by the speech. Why, very well. If Mercury then be but the speech, I hope he is no god then, by their own confessions. But they make gods of no gods, and offering to unclean spirits instead of being inspired with gods, are possessed with devils. And because the world and elements had no room for Mars to work in nature, they made him god of war, which is a work of man not to be desired after. But if Mars be war as Mercury is speech, I would it were as sure that there were no war to be falsely called god, as it is plain that Mars is no god.

CHAPTER XV.

Of certain stars that the Pagans called their gods.

PERHAPS these stars are their gods that they call by their gods' names. For one they call Mercury, another Mars: nay, and there is one Jove also, though all the world be but Jove. So is there a Saturn, yet Saturn has no small place besides, being the ruler of all seed. But then there is the brightest of all, Venus, though they will needs make her the moon also: though she and Juno contend as much for that glorious star, in their opinion, as they did for the golden apple. For some say that Lucifer is Venus: others, Juno, but Venus (as she does ever) gets it from Juno. For many more call it Venus than Juno; there are few or none of the latter opinion. But who will not laugh to have Jove named the king of gods and yet see Venus have a far brighter star than his? His fulgor should have been as super-eminent as his power: but it seems less, they reply, and hers more, because one is nearer the earth than another. Why, but if the highest place deserve the honour, why has not Saturn the grace from Jupiter? Or could not the vanity that made Jove king, mount so high as the stars? So that Saturn ob-

tains that in heaven which he could neither attain in his kingdom nor in the Capitol? But why has not Janus a star as well as Jove, being all the world, and comprehending all as well as Jove? Did he fall to composition for fear of law, and for one star in heaven was content to take many faces upon earth? And if two stars only made them count Mars and Mercury for deities, being notwithstanding nothing but speech and war, no parts of the world, but acts of men: why has not Aries, Taurus, Cancer, Scorpio, &c., that are in the highest heaven, and have more certain motions, why have they not temples, altars, and sacrifices, nor any place either among the popular gods or the selected?

CHAPTER XVI.

Of Apollo, Diana, and other select gods, called parts of the world.

AND though they make Apollo, a wizard and a physician, yet to making him a part of the world, they say he is the sun, and Diana, his sister, is the moon, and goddess of journeys. So is she a virgin also, untouched, and they both bear shafts, because these two stars only do send rays to the earth. Vulcan, they say, is the world's fire. Neptune, the water: Father Dis, the earth's foundation and depth; Bacchus and Ceres, seed gods, he to the masculine, she of the feminine: or he of the moisture, and she of the dry part of the seed. All this now has reference to the world, to Jove, who is called the "full parent general," because he both begets and brings forth all things feminal. And Ceres, the great mother, her they make the earth, and Juno besides. Thus the second causes of things are in her power, though Jove be called the full parent, as they affirm him to be all the world. And Minerva, because they had made her the art's goddess, and had never a star for her, they made her also the sky, or the moon; Vesta they accounted the chief of all the goddesses, being taken for the earth: and yet gave her the protection of the world's fire, more light, and not so violent as that of Vulcan's was. And thus by all these select gods they intend but the world: in some total, and in others partial: total, as Jove is: partial, as Genius, the great mother, Sol and Luna, or rather Apollo and Diana, sometimes one god stands for many things, and sometimes one thing presents many gods; the first is true in Jupiter, he is all the world, he but only heaven, and he is only a star in heaven: so is Juno, goddess of all second causes, yet only the air, and yet the earth, though she might get the star from Venus. So is Minerva the highest sky, and the moon in the lowest sky, as they hold. The second is true in the world, which is both Jove and Janus: and in the earth, which is both Juno, the great mother, and Ceres.

CHAPTER XVII.

That Varro himself held his opinions of the gods to be ambiguous.

BUT even as these cited examples do, so all the rest, rather make the matter intricate than plain : and following the force of opinionative error, sway this way, and that way, that Varro himself likes better to doubt of them, than to deliver this or that positively ; for of his three last books, having first ended that of the certain gods, then he came into that of the uncertain ones, and there he says : “ If I set down ambiguities of these gods, I am not blameworthy. He that thinks I ought to judge of them, or might, let him judge when he reads them. I had rather call all my former assertions into question than propound all that I am to handle in this book, positively.” Thus does he make doubts of his doctrine of the certain gods as well as the rest. Besides in his book of the select ones, having made his preface out of natural theology entering into these politic fooleries, and mad fictions, where truth both opposed him and antiquity oppressed him, here (says he) “ I will write of the gods to whom the Romans have built temples, and diversity of statues, but I will write so as Xenophanes Colophonius writes : what I think, not what I will defend, for man may think, but God is He that knoweth.” Thus timorously he promises to speak of things not known nor firmly believed, but only opinionative, and doubted of being to speak of men’s institutions. He knew that there was the world, heaven, and earth, stars, and all those together with the whole universe subject unto one powerful and invisible King : this he firmly believed, but he durst not say that Janus was the world, or that Saturn was Jove’s father and yet his subject, nor of the rest of this nature durst he affirm anything confidently.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The likeliest cause of the propagation of Paganism.

OF all these the most credible reason is this : that these gods were men that by the means of such as were their flatterers, had each of them rites and sacrifices ordained for them correspondent unto some of their deeds, manners, fortunes, wits, and so forth : and that other men (rather devils) sucking in these errors, and delighting in their ceremonies’ novelties, so gave them their propagation, being furthered with poetical fictions, and diabolical illusions. For it were a likelier matter that an ungracious son did fear killing by as ungracious a father, and so expelled him from his

kingdom, than that which he says, that Jove is above Saturn because the efficient cause which is Jove's, is before the material which is Saturn's. For were this true, Saturn should never have been before Jove, nor consequently his father. For the cause goeth always before the seed, but the seed never generates the cause. But in this endeavour to honour the vain fables, or impious acts of men with natural interpretations, their most learned men are brought into such quandaries, that we cannot choose but pity their vanity as well as the others.

CHAPTER XIX.

The interpretations of the worship of Saturn.

SATURN (say they) devoured all his children, that is, all seeds return to the earth from whence they came: and a clod of earth was laid instead of Jove for him to devour, by which is meant that men did use to bury their corn in the earth before that ploughing was invented. So then should Saturn be called the earth itself, and not the seeds, for it is the earth that doth as it were devour its own offspring, when as the seeds it produces are all returned into it again. But what correspondence has men's covering of corn with clods, unto the laying of Saturn a clod instead of Jove? Is not the corn which is covered with the clod, returned into the earth's womb as well as the rest? For this is spoken as if he that laid the clod, took away the seed. Thus, say they, by the laying of this clod was Jove taken from Saturn, when as the laying of a clod upon a seed makes the earth to devour it the sooner. Again, being so, Jove is the seed, not the seed's cause, as was said but now. But these men's brains run so far astray with those fond interpretations, that they know not well what to say. A sickle he bears for his husbandry, they say: now in his reign was not husbandry invented, and therefore (as our author interprets) the first times were called his, because as then men did live upon the earth's voluntary increase and fruits. Whether took he the sickle upon the loss of his sceptre as one that having been an idle king in his own reign would become a painful labourer in his son's. Then he proceedeth, and saith that some people, as the Carthaginians, offered infants in sacrifice to him, and others, as the Gauls, offered men, because mankind is chief of all things produced of seed. But needs more of this bloody vanity? This the observation of it all, that none of these interpretations have reference to the true, living, incorporeal, changeless nature, whereof the eternal life is to be craved: but all their ends are in all things corporal, temporal, mutable, and mortal, and whereas Saturn, they say did geld his father Cælus, that is (quoth he) "to be understood thus, that the divine seed, is in Saturn's power and not in

Heaven s : that is, nothing in Heaven hath original from seed." Behold here is Saturn made Heaven's son, that is, Jove's. For they affirm steadfastly that Jove is Heaven. Thus does falsehood without any opposer overthrow itself : he says further, that he was called *κρόνος* that is, space of time, without the which no seed can come to perfection. This and much like is spoken of Saturn in reference to the seed : surely Saturn with all this power should have been sufficient alone to have governed the seed : why should they call any more gods to this charge, as Liber, and Libera, or Ceres? of whose power over seed he speaks as if he had not spoken at all of Saturn.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the sacrifices of Ceres Eleusina.

OF Ceres' sacrifices, those of Eleusina, used at Athens, were the most noble. Of them does Varro say little or nothing ; only he talks a little of the corn that Ceres found out, and of her loss of Proserpina that was ravished by Pluto. And she (he says) does signify fruitfulness of seed, which one time failing, and the earth seeming to bewail that want of fertility, it grew to an opinion that Hell, or Pluto, had taken away the daughter of Ceres, the said fruitfulness, which of creeping forward, is called Proserpina, which thing they deploring in public manner, because that fertility came again, all their joy returned at the return of Proserpina, and so had Ceres' feasts institution ; furthermore, he says this, that she has many things in her sacrifices which have no reference but to the corn.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of the obscenity of Bacchus' sacrifices.

BUT now for Liber's sacrifices, who rules not only all moisture of seeds and fruits, whereof wine seems principal, but of creatures also : to describe their full turpitude, it irks me for loss of time, but not for these men's foolish pride. Amongst a great deal of necessary omission, let this go, whereas he says that Liber's sacrifices were kept with such licence in the highways in Italy, that they adored men's privities in his honour : their beastliness exulting, and scorning any more secrecy. This beastly sight upon his feast days was honourably mounted upon a waggon, and first rode thus through the country, and then was brought into the city in this pomp. But at Lavinium they kept a whole month holy to Liber, using that space all the beastly words they could

devise, until the beastly spectacle had passed through the market place, and was placed, where it used to stand. And then must the most honest matron of the town crown it with a garland. Thus for the seed's success was Liber adored: and to expel witchcraft from the fields, an honest matron must do that in public, which a whore should not do upon the stage if the matrons looked on. For this was Saturn accounted insufficient in this charge, that the unclean soul finding occasion to multiply the gods, and by this uncleanness being kept from the true God, and prostitute unto the false, through more unclean desires, might give holy names to these sacrileges, and entangle itself in eternal pollution with the devils.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of Neptune, Salacia, and Venilia.

Now Neptune had one Salacia to wife, governess (they say) of the lowest parts of the sea, why is Venilia joined with her, but to keep the poor soul prostitute to a multitude of devils? But what says this rare theology to stop our mouths with reason? Venilia is the flowing tide; Salacia the ebbing: what? two goddesses, when the water ebbing, and the water flowing, is all one? See how the soul's lust flows to damnation! Though this water going be the same returning, yet by this vanity are two more devils invited, to whom the soul goes, and never returns. I pray thee, Varro, or you that have read so much, and boast what you have learned, explain me this, not by the eternal unchanging nature which is only god, but by the world's soul, and the parts, which you hold true gods. The error wherein you make Neptune to be that part of the world's soul that is in the sea, that is somewhat tolerable: but is the water ebbing and the water flowing two parts of the world, or of the world's soul? which of all your wits contains this unwise credence? But why did your ancestors ordain you those two goddesses, but that they would provide that you should not be ruled by any more gods, but by many more devils, that delighted in such vanities: but why has Salacia, that you call the inmost sea, being there under her husband, lost her place? for you bring her up above when she is the ebbing tide: has she thrust her husband down into the bottom for entertaining Venilia to his harlot.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the earth, held by Varro to be a goddess, because the world's soul (his god) does penetrate his lowest part, and communicates his essence therewith.

WE see one earth, filled with creatures : yet being a mass of elemental bodies and the world's lowest part, why call they it a goddess ? because it is fruitful ? why are not men gods then that make it so with labour, not with worship ? No, the part of the world's soul (say they) " contained in her, maketh her divine : " good : as though that soul were not more apparent in man : without all question, yet men are no gods : and yet which is most lamentable, are subjected so that they adore the inferiors as gods, such is their miserable error. Varro, in his book of the select gods, puts three degrees of the soul in all nature. One, living in all bodies unsensitive, only having life : this, he says, we have in our bones, nails and hair : and so have trees living without sense. Secondly, the power of sense diffused through our eyes, ears, nose, mouth and touch. Thirdly, the highest degree of the soul, called the mind, or intellect : confined only unto man's fruition : wherein because men are like gods, that part in the world he calls a god, and in use a *genius*. So divides he the world's soul into three degrees. First, stones and wood, and this earth insensible which we tread on. Secondly, the world's sense, the heavens, or *æther* ; thirdly, her soul set in the stars (his believed gods), and by them descending through the earth, goddess Tellus : and when it comes in the sea, it is Neptune : stay, now back a little from this moral theology, whether he went to refresh himself after his toil in these straits : back again I say to the civil, let us plead in this court a little. I say not yet, that if the earth and stones be like our nails and bones, they have no more intellect than sense. Or if our bones and nails be said to have intellect, because we have it, he is as very a fool that calls them gods in the world, as he that should term them men in us. But this perhaps is for philosophers, let us to our civil theme : for it may be though he lift up his head a little to the freedom of this natural theology, yet coming to this book and knowing what he had to do, he looks now and then back, and says this, lest his ancestors and others should be held to have adored Tellus and Neptune to no end. But this I say, seeing earth only is that part of the world's soul that penetrates earth : why is it not made entirely one goddess, and so called Tellus ? which done, where is Orcus', Jove's, and Neptune's brother, father Dis ? and where is Proserpina his wife that some opinions there recorded, hold to be the earth's depth, not her fertility ? If they say the soul of the world that passes in the upper part is Dis,

and that in the lower, Proserpina, what shall then become of Tellus? for thus is she entirely divided into halves: that where she should be third, there is no place, unless some will say that Orcus and Proserpina together are Tellus; and so make not three but one or two of them: yet three they are held, and worshipped by three several sorts of rites, by their altars, priests, and statues, and are indeed three devils that do draw the deceived soul to damnable whoredom. But one other question: What part of the world's soul is Tellumo? No, says he, the earth has two powers, a masculine to produce, and a feminine to receive; this is Tellus, and that Tellumo: but why then do the priests (as he shows) add other two and make them four? Tellumo, Tellus, Altor, Rusor? for the two first, you are answered: why Altor? of *alo*, to nourish, earth nourishes all things. Why Rusor? of *rursus*, again, all things turn again to earth.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of earth's surnames, and significations, which though they arose of diverse originals, yet should they not be accounted diverse gods.

THEREFORE earth for her four qualities ought to have four names, yet not to make four gods. One Jove serves to many surnames, and so does one Juno: in all which the multitude of their powers constitute but one god and one goddess, not producing multitude of gods. But as the vilest women are sometimes ashamed of the company that their lust calls them into, so the polluted soul, prostitute unto all hell, though it loved multitudes of false gods, yet it sometimes loathed them. For Varro, as shaming at this crew, would have Tellus to be but one goddess. They call her (says he) the *great mother*, and her timbrel is a sign of the earth's roundness: the turrets on her head, of the towns: the seats about her, of her eternal stability when all things else are moved: her *galli*, priests, signify that such as want seed must follow the earth that contains all: their violent motions about her do advise the tillers of earth not to sit idle, for there is still work for them. The cymbals signify the noises with plough-irons, etc., in husbandry; they are of brass, for so were these instruments before iron was found out. The tame lion signified that the roughest land might by tillage be made fertile. And then he adds, that she was called *mother earth*, and many other names, which made them think her several gods. They held earth to be Ops (says he) because help (*opis*) makes her more fruitful: Mother, for her general production. Great, for giving meat. Proserpina, because the fruits do creep (*proserpunt*) out of her. Vesta, for that the herbs are her vesture: and so, says he, are other deities fitly reduced unto her by several respects. But if she be one goddess (as in

truth she is not), why run ye to so many? Let one have all these names, and not be many goddesses. But error's power prevailed to draw Varro fearfully after it: for he says, neither does this control their opinions that take these for many gods. There may be one thing (says he) and many things therein. Well, suppose that many things are in a man? therefore many men? many things are in a goddess, therefore many goddesses? But let them divide, combine, multiply, reply and imply what they will. These are the mysteries of great *mother earth*, all referred to seed and husbandry. But does your timbrel, turrets, eunuchs, ravings, cymbals, and lions in all this reference, promise eternal life? do your gelded *galli* serve her to show that seed-wanters must follow the earth, and not rather that the following of her brought them to this want? for whether does the service of this goddess supply their want or bring them to want? is this to explain, or to explode rather? Nor is the devils' power herein ever a jot observed, that could exact such cruelties, and yet promise nought worth the wishing. If earth were held no goddess, men would lay their hands upon her and strengthen themselves by her, and not upon themselves, to enervate themselves for her: if she were no goddess, she would be made so fertile by other hands, that she should never make men barren by their own hands. And whereas in Liber's sacrifices an honest matron must crown that beastly member, her husband perhaps standing by blushing and sweating (if he have any shame), and whereas in marriages the bride must ride upon Priapus, these are far more light and contemptible than that cruel obscenity, and obscene cruelty: for here the devils illude both sexes, but make neither of them their own murderers. There they fear the bewitching of their corn, here they fear not the unmaning of themselves. There the bride is not so shamed that she either loses chastity or virginity; here the massacre of manhood is such, the gelded person is left neither man nor woman.

CHAPTER XXV.

What exposition the Greek wise men give of the gelding of Atys.

BUT we have forgotten Atys and his meaning all this while, in memory of whose love the *galli* are gelded. But the wise Greeks forgot not this goodly matter. Because of the earth's front in the spring, being fairer then than ever, Porphyry, a famous philosopher, says, Atys signifies the flowers, and was therefore gelded, because the flower falls off before the fruit. So then, not Atys, man, or manlike, but his privy parts only were compared to the flowers, for they fell off in his spring; nay, many fell not off, were cut off; nor followed any

fruit upon this, but rather lasting sterility. What then does all that which remained of him after his gelding signify? whither is that referred? the meaning of that now? or because they could find no reference for this remainder, do they think that he became that which the fable shows, and as is recorded? Nay, Varro is ours against them in that justly, and will not affirm it, for his learning told him it was false?

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of the filthiness of this great mother's sacrifices.

No more would Varro speak of the Ganymedes that were consecrated unto the said great mother, against all shame of man and woman, who with anointed heads, painted faces, loose bodies, and lascivious paces, went even until yesterday up and down the streets of Carthage, basely begging of the people wherewithal to sustain themselves. Of these have not I (to my knowledge) read anything: their expositions, tongues, and reasons were all ashamed and to seek. Thus the great mother exceeded all her son-gods, not in greatness of deity, but of obscenity. Janus himself was not so monstrous as this monster; he was but deformed in his statue, but this was both bloody and deformed in her sacrifices. He had members of stone given him, but she takes members of flesh from all her attendance. This shame all Jove's letcheries came short of; he, besides his female rapes, defamed heaven, but with one Ganymede; but she has both shamed heaven and polluted earth with multitudes of professed and public Sodomites. It may be thought that Saturn, that gelded his father, comes near, or exceeds this filthiness: O, but in his religion men are rather killed by others than gelded by themselves. He ate up his sons, says the poets; let the physical say what they will, history says he killed them, yet did not the Romans learn to sacrifice their sons to him from the Africans. But this great mother brought her eunuchs even into the Roman temple, keeping her bestial cruelty even there, thinking to help the Romans to strength, by cutting away their strength's fountains. What is Mercury's theft, Venus' lust, the whoredom and the turpitude of the rest (which, were they not commonly sung upon stages, we would relate), what are they all to this foul evil, that the mother of the gods only had as her peculiar? chiefly the rest being held but poetical fictions, as if the poets had invented this too, that they were pleasing to the gods? So then it was the poets' audaciousness that recorded them, but whose is it to exhibit them at the gods' urgent exacting them, but the gods' direct obscenity, the devils' confessions, and the wretched souls' illusions? But this adoration of Cybele by gelding oneself the poets never in-

vented, but did rather abhor it than mention it. Is any one to be dedicated to these select gods for blessedness of life hereafter, that cannot live honestly under them here, but lies in bondage to such unclean filthiness, and so many damned devils? but all this (say they) hath reference to the world; nay, look if it be not to the wicked. What cannot be referred to the world that is found to be in the world? But we do seek a mind that, trusting in the true religion, does not worship the world as his god, but commends it for his sake, as his admired work; and, being expiate from all the stains of the world, so approaches to Him that made the world; we see these selected gods more notified than the rest, not to the advancement of their merits, but the divulging of their shames; this proves them men, as not only poems but histories also do explain; for that which Virgil says, *Æn.* 8:—

“Primus ab æthereo venit Saturnus Olympo,
Arma Jovis fugiens, et regnis exul adeptis.”

‘Whence Saturn came Olympus was the place,
Flying Jove’s arms, exil’d in wretched case.’

And so as follows, the same has Euhemerus written in a continue history, translated into Latin by Ennius; whence because much be taken both in Greek and also in Latin that has been spoken against these errors by others before us, I cease to urge them further.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of the naturalists’ figments that neither adore the true Deity, nor use the adoration thereto belonging.

WHEN I consider the physiologies which learned and quick-witted men have endeavoured to turn into divine matters, I discover as plain as day that they cannot have reference to ought but natural and terrestrial (though invisible) objects, all which are far from the true God: if this extended no further than the congruence which true religion permitted, then were their want of the knowledge of the true God to be deplored, and yet their abstinence from acting or authorising obscenity, to be in part approved. But since that it is wickedness to worship either body or soul for the true God (whose only dwelling in the soul makes it happy), how much more vile is it to adore these things with a worship neither attaining salvation nor temporal renown? and therefore if any worldly element be set up for adoration with temple, priest, or sacrifice, which are the true God’s peculiar, or any created spirit, all were good and pure: it is not so ill a thing because the things used in the worship are evil, as because they are such as are due only to His worship, to

whom all worship is due. But if any one say he worships the true God in monstrous statues, sacrifices of men, crowning of privities, gelding, payments for sodomy, wounds, filthy and obscene festival games, he does not offend because He that he worships is to be worshipped, but because He is not to be worshipped so as he does worship Him. But he that with these filthinesses, worships not God the creator of all, but a creature, be it harmless or no, animate or dead; double is his offence to God: once for adoring that for Him which is not He; and once for adoring Him with such rites as are not to be afforded unto either. But the foulness of these men's worship is plain: but what or whom they worship is not so, were it not for their own history that records the gods that exacted those bestialities so terribly: so therefore doubtless they were devils, called by their politic theology into idols, and passing from thence into men's hearts.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

That Varro's doctrine of theology hangeth no way together.

THEREFORE what is it to the purpose, that so learned a man as Varro has endeavoured to reduce all these gods to heaven and earth, and cannot? They slip from his fingers and fall away, do what he can: for being to speak of the goddesses: seeing that as I said (quoth he) "in my first book of the places, there are observed two beginnings of the gods, producing deities celestial and terrestrial, as before being to speak of the masculine gods, we began with heaven, concerning Janus, called heaven or the world: so now of the feminine beginning with the earth, Tellus." I see how sore so good a wit is already plunged. He is drawn by a likelihood to make heaven the agent and earth the patient, and therefore gives the first the masculine form, and the latter the feminine: and yet understands not that He that gives those unto both these two, made them both. And hereupon he interprets the Samothracians' noble mysteries so, saying that he will lay open such things thereof to his nation as it never knew: this he promises most religiously. For he says he hath observed in images that one thing signifies earth, another heaven, another the abstracts of forms, Plato's "idea": he will have Jove to be heaven, Juno earth, Minerva the ideas: heaven the efficient, earth the substance, idea the form of each effect: now here I omit to say that Plato ascribed so much to these forms, that he says heaven does nothing without them, but itself was made by them. This, I say, that Varro in his book of the select gods, has utterly overthrown this distinction of those three: heaven he places for the masculine, for the feminine, earth: amongst which he puts Minerva, that but now was

above heaven. And Neptune, a masculine god, is in the sea, therefore rather in earth than heaven. Father Dis, or Pluto, a male god, and their brother, he is also in earth upmost, and Proserpina, his wife, under him. How can those heaven gods now be earth gods, or these earth gods have rooms above or reference to heaven? what sobriety, solidity, or certainty is in this discourse? And earth is all their mother, that is served with nothing but sodomy, cutting and gelding. Why then does he say, Janus, the gods' chief, and Tellus the goddesses', where error neither allows one head, nor fury a like time? why go they vainly about to refer these to the world, as if it could be adored for the true God, the work for the maker? That these can have no reference thither, the truth has convinced: refer them but unto dead men, and devils, and the controversy is at an end.

CHAPTER XXIX.

That all that the naturalists refer to the world's parts, should be referred to God.

FOR this their natural theology refers all these things to the world, which (would they avoid scruple of sacrilege) they should of right refer to the true God, the world's Maker and Creator of all souls and bodies. Observe but this, we worship God, not heaven, nor earth (of which two parts of the world consists): nor a soul or souls diffused through all the parts thereof, but a God that made heaven and earth and all therein, He made all creatures that live, brutish and senseless, sensitive and reasonable: and now to run through the operations of this true and high God, briefly, which they reducing to absurd and obscene mysteries, induced many devils by. We worship that God that has given motion, existence, and limits to each created nature, that knows, contains, and disposes of all causes, that gave power to the seeds, and reason to such as he vouchsafed: that has bestowed the use of speech upon us, that has given knowledge of future things to such spirits as he pleases: and prophecies by whom he please, that for man's due correction, orders and ends all wars and worldly tribulations: that created the violent and vehement fire of this world, for the temperature of this great and huge mass: that framed and guided all the waters: that set up the sun as the world's clearest light, and gave it congruent act and motion: that takes not all power from the spirits infernal: that affords nourishment moist or dry unto every creature according to the temperature: that founded the earth and makes it fertile: that gives the fruits thereof to men and beasts: that knows and orders all causes, principal and secondary: that gives the moon her motion: and has set down ways

in heaven and earth to direct our change of place : that has graced the wit He created, with arts and sciences, as ornaments to nature : that instituted copulation for propagation sake : that gave men the use of the earthly fire to meet by and use in their conventions. These are the things that learned Varro either from others' doctrine or his own conjecture strives to ascribe unto the selected gods by a sort of (I wot never what) natural interpretations.

CHAPTER XXX.

The means to discern the Creator from the creatures, and to avoid the worshipping of so many gods for one, because there are so many powers in one.

BUT these are the operation of one only and true God : yet as one and the same god in all places, all in all, not included in place, not confined to local quantity, indivisible and immutable, filling heaven and earth with His present power, His nature needing no help. So does He dispose of all His works of creation, that each one has the peculiar motion permitted it. For though it can do nothing without Him, yet is not anything that which He is. He doth much by His angels, but only He makes them also blessed. So that imagine He do send His angels to men for some causes, yet He makes not the men blessed by His angels, but by Himself as He does the angels : from this true and everlasting God, and from none other, hope we for life eternal.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The peculiar benefits (besides his common bounty) that God bestows upon his servants.

FOR of Him, besides these benefits whereof we have spoken partly, such as are left to the administration of nature and bestowed both upon good and bad, we have a particular bounty of His love particular only to the good : for although we can never yield Him sufficient thanks for our being, life, sense, and understanding of Him, yet for that He has not forsaken us when we were involved in sin, turned away from His contemplation, and blinded with love of black iniquity, for that He has sent us His Word, His only Son, by whose incarnation and extreme passion for us we might conceive how dearly God esteemed us, and by that singular sacrifice be purged from our guilt, and by the illumination of His Holy Spirit in our hearts, tread down all difficulties, and ascend

to that eternal rest, and ineffable sweetness of His contemplation : what heart, how many tongues, can suffice to return sufficient thanks for this last benefit ?

CHAPTER XXXII.

That the mystery of our redemption by Christ was not obscure in the precedent times, but continually intimated in divers significations.

THIS mystery of eternal life, even from the first original of mankind, was first by the angels declared unto such as God vouchsafed, by divers signs and mystical shadows congruent to the times wherein they were shown. And then the Hebrews being gathered into a commonwealth to keep the memory of this misery, had divers that prophesied the things that should fall out from the coming of Christ unto this very day : some of which prophets understood the prophecies, and some did not. Afterwards they were dispersed amongst the Gentiles to leave them the testimony of the scriptures which promised eternal salvation in Jesus Christ : for not only all the prophecies, which were in words, and all the precepts which had reference to actions and manners, were therein contained, but all their sacrifices also, the priest-hoods, temple or tabernacle, altars, ceremonies, feasts, and whatever has reference to that divine worship of God, were all presages, and prophetical significations of that eternal life bestowed by Christ, all which we now believe either are fulfilled, or see are now in fulfilling, or trust shall be fulfilled hereafter in Him.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

That Christianity only is of power to lay open the devil's subtlety and delight, in illuding of ignorant men.

THIS only true religion is of power to lay open that the Gentiles' gods are most unclean spirits, desiring upon the occasion of some departed souls, or under the shapes of some earthly creatures, to be accounted gods, and in their proud impurity taking pleasure in those obscenities as in divine honours, maligning the conversion of all men's souls unto the true God. From whose beastly and abominable tyranny a man then gets free, when he lays his belief upon Him, who by His rare example of humility declared from what height and for what pride those wicked fiends had their fall. Hence arose those routs of gods, whereof partly we have spoken, and others of other nations, as well as those we now are in hand with, the senate of selected gods : selected indeed, but for

villainy, not for virtue. Whose rites Varro, seeking by reason to reduce to nature, and to cover turpitude with an honest cloak, can by no means make them square together : because indeed the causes that he held (or would have others hold) for their worship, are not such as he takes them, nor causes of their worship. For if they or their life were so, though they should not concern the true God, nor life eternal which true religion must afford, yet their colour of reason would be some mitigation for the absurd acts of ignorance : which Varro did endeavour to bring about in divers their theatre fables, or temple mysteries : wherein he freed not the theatres for their correspondence with the temples, but condemned the temples for their correspondence with the theatres : yet endeavouring with natural reasons to wipe away the filthy shapes that those presentments imprinted in the senses.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of Numa's books, which the Senate, for keeping their mysteries in secret, did command should be burned.

BUT contrariwise, we do find (as Varro himself said of Numa's books) that these natural reasons given for these ceremonies could no way be allowed of : nor worthy of their priests' reading, no, not so much as their secret reserving. For now I will tell you what I promised in my third book to relate in convenient place : One Terentius (as Varro has it in his book "De Cultu Deorum") had some ground near to Mount Janiculus, and his servants ploughing near to Numa's tomb, the plough turned up some books, containing the ceremonies' institutions : Terentius brought them into the city to the Prætor, who having looked in them, brought this so weighty an affair before the Senate : where having read some of the first causes why he had instituted this and that in their religion, the Senate agreed with dead Numa, and like religious fathers, gave order to the Prætor for the burning of them.

Every one here may believe as he list : nay, let any contentious mad patron of absurd vanity say here what he list. Sufficeth it, I show that the causes that Numa their king gave for his own institutions, ought neither to be shown to people, senate, no, nor to the priests themselves : and that Numa by his unlawful curiosity came to the knowledge of such devilish secrets as he was worthy to be reprehended for writing of. Yet though he were a king that feared no man, he durst not for all that either publish them, or abolish them : publish them he would not for fear of teaching wickedness : burn them he durst not for fear of offending the devils : so he buried them where he thought they would be safe, not fearing the turning up of his grave by a plough.

But the Senate, fearing to reprove their ancestors' religion, and so agreeing with Numa's doctrine, yet held these books too pernicious either to be buried again (lest men's madder curiosity should seek them out) or to be put to any use but burning: to the end that seeing they must needs stick to their old superstition, they might do it with less blame by concealing the causes of it, whose knowledge would have disturbed the whole city.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of hydromancy, whereby Numa was mocked with apparitions.

FOR Numa himself, being not instructed by any prophet or angel of God, was fain to fall to hydromancy: making his gods (or rather his devils) to appear in water, and instruct him in his religious institutions. Which kind of divination, says Varro, came from Persia, and was used by Numa, and afterwards by Pythagoras, wherein they used blood also, and called forth spirits infernal. Necromancy the Greeks call it, but necromancy or hydromancy, whether you like, there it is that the dead seem to speak. How they do these things, look they to that: for I will not say that their laws prohibited the use of such things in their cities before the coming of our Saviour, I do not say so; perhaps they were allowed it. But hence did Numa learn his ordinances which he published without publishing their causes: so afraid was he of that which he had learned, and which afterwards the Senate burned. But why then does Varro give them such a sort of other natural reasons, which, had they been in Numa's books, they had not been burned, or else Varro's, that were dedicated to Cæsar the priest, should have been burned for company? So that, Numa's having nymph Ægeria to his wife was (as Varro says) nothing but his use of water in hydromancy. For so use actions to be spiced with falsehood and turned into fables. So by that hydromancy did this curious king learn his religious laws that he gave the Romans, and which the priests have in their books; marry for their causes them he learned also, but kept to himself: and after a sort entombed them in death with himself, such was his desire to conceal them from the world. So then either were these books filled with the devil's bestial desires, and thereby all the politic theology that presents them such filthinesses, made altogether execrable, or else the gods were shown by them, to be none but men departed whom worm-eaten antiquity persuaded the world to be gods, whereas they were devils that delighted in those obscene ministries, and under their names whom the people held divine, got place to play their impostures, and by illusive miracles to captivate all their souls. But it was by God's eternal

secret providence that they were permitted to confess all to Numa, who by his hydromancy was become their friend, and yet not to warn him rather to burn them at his death, than to bury them : for they could neither withstand the plough that found them, nor Varro's pen, that unto all memory has recorded them. For the devils cannot exceed their direct permission, which God allows them for their merits, that unto His justice seem either worthy to be only afflicted, or wholly seduced by them. But the horrible danger of these books, and their distance from true divinity, may by this be gathered, that the Senate chose rather to burn them that Numa had but hidden, than to fear what he feared that durst not burn them. Wherefore he that will neither have happiness in the future life, nor godliness in the present, let him use these means for eternity. But he that will have no society with the devil, let him not fear the superstition that their adoration exacts, but let him stick to the true religion which convinces and confounds all their villainies and abominations.





THE EIGHTH BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

Of the questions of natural theology to be handled with the most excellent philosophers.

NOW had we need to call our wits together in far more exact manner than we used in our precedent discourses ; for now we are to have to do with the theology called natural, nor deal we against each fellow (for this is neither the civil, nor stage theology, the one of which records the gods' filthy crimes, and the other their more filthy desires, and both show them devils and not gods), but against philosophers whose very name, truly interpreted, professes a love of wisdom. Now if God be wisdom, as truth and scripture testify,¹ then a true philosopher is a lover of God. But because the thing thus called is not in all men that boast of that name (for all that are called philosophers are not lovers of the true wisdom), we must select such as we know how they stand affected by their writings, and with them dispute of this question in due fashion. I undertake not here to refute all the philosophers' assertions that concern other matters, but such only as pertain to this theology (which word in Greek signifies speech of divinity), nor all of that kind either, but only such as holding a deity respecting matters terrestrial, yet affirm that the adoration of one unchangeable God suffices not unto eternal life, but that many such are made and ordained by Him, to be adored also for this respect. For these do surpass Varro's opinion in their aim at the truth : for he could carry his natural theology no further than the world and the world's soul : but these beyond all nature living, acknowledge a God, creator not only of this visible world (usually called heaven and earth), but of every living soul also : and one that makes the reasonable soul blessed, by the participation of His incorporeal and unchangeable light : that these philosophers were called Platonists, of their first founder Plato, I think that none that has heard of these opinions but knows.

¹ Wisdom vii. 10 ; Heb. i.

CHAPTER II.

Of the two kinds of philosophers, Italian and Ionian, and of their authors.

WHEREFORE concerning this Plato, as much as shall concern our purpose, I will speak in brief, with a remembrance of such as before him held the same positions. The Greek monuments (a language the most famous of all the nations) do record two kinds of philosophers: the Italian, out of that part of Italy which was whilom called Magna Grecia: and the Ionian, in the country now called Greece. The Italian had their original from Pythagoras of Samos, who also was the first author (they say) of the name of philosophers. For whereas they were before called wise men, that professed a reformed course of life above the rest, he being asked what he professes answered, "He was a philosopher, that is a lover and a longer after wisdom:" but to call himself a wise man, he held a part of too great arrogance. But the Ionics were they whose chief was Thales Milesius, one of the seven sages. But the other six were distinguished by their several courses of life, and the rules they gave for order of life. But Thales, to propagate his doctrine to succession, searched into the secrets of nature, and committing his positions unto monuments and letters, grew famous: but most admired he was, because he got the knowledge of astrological computations, and was able to prognosticate the eclipses of sun and moon, yet did he think that all the world was made of water: that it was the beginning of all the elements, and all thereof composed. Nor did he teach that this fair admired universe was governed by any divine or mental power. After him came Anaximander, his scholar, but he changed his opinion concerning the natures of things: holding that the whole world was not created of one thing (as Thales held, of water), but that everything had original from his proper beginnings, which singular beginnings he held to be infinite, and that infinite worlds were thereby gotten, all which had their successive original, continuance, and end: nor did he mention any divine mind as rector of any part hereof. This man left Anaximenes, his scholar and successor, who held all things to have their causes from the infinite air: but he professed there were gods: yet made them creatures of the air, not creators thereof. But Anaxagoras, his scholar, first held the divine mind to be the efficient cause of all things visible, out of an infinite matter consisting of unlike parts in themselves, and that every kind of thing was produced according to the *species*, but all by the work of the divine essence. And Diogenes, another of Anaximenes' followers, held that the air was the substance producing all things, but that it was aided by the divine essence without which of it-

self it could do nothing. To Anaxagoras succeeded Archelaus, and he also held all things to consist of this dissimilitude of parts, yet so, as there was a divine essence wrought in them, by dispersing and compacting of this consonance and dissonance. This man's scholar was Socrates, Plato's master, for whose sake I have made this short recapitulation of these other.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Socratical discipline.

SOCRATES therefore was the first that reduced philosophy to the reformation of manners, for all before him aimed at natural speculation rather than practice of morality : I cannot surely tell whether the tediousness of these obscurities moved Socrates to apply his mind unto some more set and certain invention, for an assistance unto beatitude : which was the scope of all the other philosophers' intents and labours : or (as some do favourably surmise) he was unwilling that men's minds, being suppressed with corrupt and earthly affects, should offer to crowd unto the height of these physical causes whose total and whose original relied solely (as he held) upon the will of God omnipotent, only and true ; wherefore he held that no mind but a purified one could comprehend them : and therefore first urged a reformed course of life, which effected, the mind unladen of terrestrial distractions might tower up to eternity, and with the one intellectual purity, stick firm in contemplation of the nature of that incorporeal, and unchanged, and incomprehensible light, which contains the causes of all creation. Yet sure it is that in his moral disputations he did with most elegant and acute urbanity tax and detect the ignorance of these overweening fellows that build castles on their own knowledge, either in this, confessing his own ignorance, or dissembling his understanding, whereupon envy taking hold, he was wrecked by a calumnious accusation, and so put to death. Yet did Athens that condemned him, afterward publicly lament for him, and the wrath of the commonty fell so sore upon his two accusers that one of them was trodden to death by the multitude, and another forced to avoid the like by a voluntary banishment. This Socrates (so famous in his life and death) left many of his scholars behind him, whose study and emulation was about morality ever, and that *summum bonum*, that greatest good, which no man wanting can attain beatitude. Which being not evident in Socrates' controversial questions, each man followed his own opinion, and made that the final good : the final good is that which, attained, makes man happy. But Socrates' scholars were so divided (strange, having all one master) that some (Aristippus) made pleasure this final good : others (Antisthenes) virtue. So each of the rest had his choice : too long to particularise.

CHAPTER IV.

Of Plato, the chief of Socrates' scholars, who divided philosophy into three kinds.

BUT of all Socrates' scholars, there was one whose glory worthily obscured all the rest: Plato. He was an Athenian, born of honest parentage, and endowed with perfection of understanding far more than all his fellows. So he, thinking that his invention and Socrates' instructions were all too short of the true aim of philosophy, and therefore would needs go travel to any place where Fame told him he might drink of the fount of noble sapience. So went he into Egypt, and there learnt all that he held worth learning, and from thence into Italy, where the Pythagoreans were famous, and there did he drain from the most eminent teachers, all the philosophy of Italy. And because he dearly affected his master Socrates, he makes him in all his dialogues to temperate that which either he had learned of others, or invented of himself, with his delicate urbanity and morality. So whereas the study of wisdom is either concerning action or contemplation, and thence assumes two several names, active and contemplative, the active consisting in the practice of morality in one's life, and the contemplative in penetrating into the abstruse causes of nature, and the nature of divinity. Socrates is said to excel in the active: Pythagoras in the contemplative. But Plato conjoined them into one perfect kind, which he subdivided into three sorts: the *moral*, consisting chiefly in action: the *natural*, in contemplation: the *rational*, in distinction of true and false: which though it be useful in both the others, yet it pertains more particularly to contemplation. And therefore this *trichotomy*, or triple division, does not contradict the other, *dichotomy*, that includes all in action and contemplation. But as for Plato's opinion herein, what should be the end of all actions, the cause of all natures, and the light of all reasons, is both tedious to follow, and may not be rashly affirmed. For delighting in his master Socrates' dissembling of his knowledge (whom he makes disputant in all his dialogues), and affecting that, he left his own opinions in these great questions as ambiguous (very near) as his master's: yet do we intend out of his own discourses, and his relations from others, to repeat some of his positions, either such as do square with truth of that religion, which our faith professes and defends, or such as oppose it: as far as shall concern the singularity or multitude of gods, whom the Catholic religion says we must worship for the obtaining of eternal felicity in the life to come. For it may be that such as knew Plato to excel all the other philosophers of all nations, and understood him far better than others, do think that in God is the cause of natures, the

light of reason and the rule of life : which have reference to the three philosophies, *natural*, *rational*, and *moral*. For if a man were created, by his excelling part to aspire to that which excels all, that is, the One, True, Almighty God, without whom nothing has being, no reason instructs, and no use assists : then let Him be searched out, in whom we have all security : let Him be beheld, in whom is all our certainty : let Him be beloved, in whom is all our morality.

CHAPTER V.

That the chief controversy with the Platonists is about theology, and that all the philosophers' opinions hereof are inferior unto theirs.

IF Plato then affirm that a wise man is an imitator, a knower and a lover of this God : whose participation makes a man blessed, what need we meddle with the rest, whereof none come so near us as he ? Away, therefore, with this same fabulous theology, pleasing reprobate affections with the crimes of the gods : away with the civil, wherein the devils, working upon the willingness of the ignorant to impure acts, cause them to celebrate mortal errors for divine honours : in the beholding of which they make their servants the ushers of their vain villanies, both by the example of these dishonest sports alluring others to their worship, and making themselves also better sport with the guilt of the spectators of these impurities. Wherein also, if there be any honesty in the temples, it is polluted by attraction of turpitude from the stages, and if any filth be presented on the stages, it is graced with the coherence it has with that of the temples. The pertinents whereof Varro, interpreting by references to heaven, nature, and causes of production, failed wholly of his purpose because the things themselves signified no such matters as he interpreted them by. And though they did, the reasonable souls, which are parts in that order of nature, are not to be held for gods : nor ought it to be subject to those things over which God has given it superiority. Away with those things also which Numa buried, being pertinent to these religious ordinances, and being afterwards turned up by a plough, were by the Senate buried. And those also (to favour our suspicion of Numa) which Alexander the Great wrote to his mother, that he had learned of Leon, an Egyptian priest : where not only Picus, Faunus, Æneas, Romulus, Hercules, Æsculapius, Bacchus, Castor, and Pollux, and other mortal men, whom they had for their gods, but even the gods of the greater families, whom Tully (not naming them though) seems to touch at in his "Tusculan Questions : " Jupiter, Juno, Saturn, Vulcan, Vesta, and many others which Varro would make nothing but elements and parts of the world, there are they all shown to have been

but men. For the priest, fearing the revealing of these mysteries, warned Alexander that as soon as his mother had read them, he should burn them. So not all this fabulous and civil theology shall give place to the Platonists (who held a true God the author of all things, the clearer of all doubts, and the giver of all goodness), but even the other philosophers also, whose gross bodily inventions held the world's beginning to be bodily : let all these give place to those good god-conceiving men : let Thales depart with his water, Anaximenes with the air, the Stoics with their fire, Epicurus with his atoms, his indivisible and insensible bodies, and all other (that now are not for us to recount) who placed nature's original in bodies either simple, compound, quick or dead ; for there were some, and the Epicureans were they, that held a possibility of producing the quick out of the dead : others would produce out of the quick, some things quick and some dead : yet all bodily, as of a body produced. But the Stoics held the fire, one of this visible world's four elements, to be wise, living, the Creator of the world whole and part, yea even God Himself. Now these and their fellows followed even the bare surmises of their own fleshly opinions in these assertions. For they had that in them which they saw not, and thought that to be in them which they saw externally : nay, which they saw not, but imagined only : now this in the sight of such a thought, is no body, but a body's likeness. But that wherewith our mind sees this body's likeness, is neither body nor likeness, and that which discerns the other, judging of the deformity or beauty of it, is more beauteous than that which it judges of. This is the nature of man's mind and reasonable soul, which is no body ; nor is the body's likeness revolved in the mind a body either. So then it is neither fire, air, water, nor earth, of which four bodies which we call elements, this visible world is composed. Now if our soul be no body, how can God that made it be a body ? So then let these give place to the Platonists, and those also that shamed to say God was a body, and yet would make Him of the same essence that our souls are : being not moved by the soul's mutability, which it were vile to ascribe unto God. Aye, but (say they), the body it is that alters the soul : of itself it is immutable. So might they say that it is a body that wounds the body : for of itself it is invulnerable. That which is immutable, nothing external can change : but that that anybody alters is not unchangeable, because it is externally alterable.

CHAPTER VI.

How the Platonists conceived of the natural part of philosophy.

WHEREFORE these philosophers whom fame (we see) has worthily preferred before the rest, did well perceive that God was no bodily thing :

and therefore passed further than all bodies in this investigation: they saw that no mutable thing was God, and therefore went further than all mutable spirits and souls to seek for Him. Again they saw that all forms of mutable things, whereby they are what they are (of what nature soever they be) have original from none but Him, that is true and unchangeable. Consequently, neither the body of this universe, the figures, qualities, motions, and elements, nor the bodies in them all, from heaven to earth, either vegetative, as trees, or sensitive also as beasts, or reasonable also, as men: nor those that need no nutriment, but subsist by themselves, as the angels, can have being, but from Him who has only simple being. For in Him to be, and to live, differ not: as if He might have being without life: neither to live, and to understand, as if He could have life without intellect: nor to understand and to be blessed, as if He could have the one and not the other. But His life, understanding, and beatitude are all but His being. From this invariable and simple essence of His, they gathered Him to be the uncreated creator of all existence. For they considered that all things are either body, or life: that the life excels the body: that sensibility is but a *species* of the body; but understanding of the life: and therefore they preferred intellect before sense: sensible things are those that are to be seen or touched. Intelligible can only be understood by the mind. For there is no bodily sweetness, be it in the body, as beauty, or in motion, as a musical song, but the mind judges thereof: which it could not do if this form were not in it more excellent, than either in that quantity of body, or that noise of voices and keeping of tones and times. Yet if it were not mutable and could not judge better than another of these sensible species, nor one be wittier, cunninger, or more exercised than another, but he that began after should profit as much as he that learned before: and he that profited after should be unaltered from his ignorance before: but that which admits *majority* or *minority*, is changeable doubtless. And therefore these learned men did well observe that the first form of things could not have existence in a subject mutable. And therefore beholding degrees of diversity in the forms of souls and bodies, and that the separation of all form from them directly destroyed them, this inferred a necessity of some unchangeable and consequently an all-excelling form: this they held the beginning of all things, uncreated, all creating, exceeding right. This which they knew of God He did manifest unto them by teaching them the graduate contemplation of His parts invisible by His works visible: as also His eternity and divinity, who created all things, both visible and temporal.¹ Thus much of their physiology, or natural philosophy.

¹ Rom. i. 19, 20.

CHAPTER VII.

The excellency of the Platonists above the rest in logic.

Now as concerning the other part of their doctrine, called logic, far be it from us to join them in comparison with those fellows that fetched the judgment of truth from the bodily senses, and held all things to be swayed by their false and frivolous positions, as Epicurus held, yea, and even Stoics. These men standing only affected to the art of disputation called logic, thought it was to be derived from the senses: affirming that from them the mind receives definable notions, *ἐννοίας*, and thence the whole method of learning and teaching has the propagation. Now here do I wonder how these men, affirming a wise man only to be beautiful, had any notion of this beauty from their sense: and how their carnal eyes could behold the fair form of wisdom. But those whom we do worthily prefer, have distinguished the conceits of the mind conceived from the forms received by the sense: giving them no more than their due, nor taking aught of their due from them. But the light of the mind giving power to conceive all, this they hold is God, that created all.

CHAPTER VIII.

That the Platonists are to be preferred in morality also.

THERE remains the moral, in Greek, *ἠθική*, which inquires after the greatest good whereto all our actions have reference: and which is desired for itself only, for no other end, but to make us blessed in attaining it only: and therefore we call it the end: as referring all the rest unto it. But desiring it only for itself: this bliss-affording good some would derive from the body, some from the mind, some from both: for seeing that a man consists of but soul and body, they believed that his chief good must have original from one of the two, and therein subsist; as the final end standing as the shot-mark of all their actions, which being once attained, their labours were crowned with perfection. So that they that added a third kind of good to these two namely, consisting of honour, riches, and such goods of fortune, otherwise called extrinsical: did not propose it as a final good, that is, to be desired in respect of itself, but referred it to another: being of itself good to the good and bad to the bad. So this good then, that some derived from the body and some from the soul, and some from both, all derived from the man's self. But they that took the body's part had the worse side, the soul had the better: marry they that took both,

expected this good from the whole man. So then, part or whole, it is from man, howsoever. These three differences made above three several sects of philosophers: each man construing diversely both of the body's good, and the soul's good, and both their goods. But let all those stand by and make them place that say that he is not happy that enjoys a body, nor he that enjoys a mind, but he that enjoys God: not as the soul enjoys the body, or itself, nor as one friend enjoys another, but as the eye enjoys the light. If the rest can say anything for the other similes, or against this last, what it is, God willing we shall in due season discover.

CHAPTER IX.

Of that philosophy that comes nearest to Christianity.

LET it suffice now to remember that Plato did determine that the end of all good was the attaining a virtuous life, which none could but he that knew and followed God: nor is any man happy by any other means. And therefore he affirms, that to be a philosopher is to love God, whose nature is incorporeal: and consequently that wisdom's student, the philosopher, is then blessed when he enjoys God. For though the enjoying of each thing a man loves does not forthwith make him happy: (for many by placing their love on hateful objects are wretched and more wretched in enjoying them) yet is no man happy that enjoys not that he loves. For even those that love what they should not, think not themselves happy in loving, but in enjoying. But he that enjoys what he loves, and loves the true and greatest good, who (but a wretch) will deny him to be happy? This true and greatest good is God, says Plato, and therefore he will have a philosopher a lover of God, that because philosophy aims at beatitude, the lover of God might be blessed by enjoying God. Wherefore whatever philosophers they were that held this of the high and true God, that He was the world's Creator, the light of understanding, and the good of all action: that He is the beginning of nature, the truth of doctrine, and the happiness of life: whether they be called Platonists (as fittest) or by any other sect: whether the Ionian teacher held as this Plato did, and understood him well; or that the Italians held it from Pythagoras and his followers, or any other of the same doctrine, of what nation soever they were, and were counted philosophers, Atlantics, Lybians, Egyptians, Indians, Persians, Chaldees, Scythians, Gauls, Spaniards, or others that observed and taught this doctrine, them we prefer before all others, and confess their propinquity with our belief. For though a Christian, used only to the scriptures, never heard of the Platonists, nor knows whether Greece held two sects

of philosophers, the Ionic and the Italian, yet is he not so ignorant in humanity, but he knows that the philosophers profess either the study of wisdom or wisdom itself. But let him beware of those that dispute of the elements of this world only, and reach not up to God that made them elements. The apostle gives us good warning of this: "Beware," says he, "lest any deceive you by philosophy and vain deceit,"¹ according to the world's elements. But lest you should think that he held all philosophers to be such, he says elsewhere: "For that which is known of God, is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them. For His invisible powers from the beginning of the world are manifested by His works, and so is His eternal virtue."² And having spoken a great matter concerning God unto the Athenians which a few of them understood, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being:" he added "as some also of your writers have said:" he knew how to beware of their errors.³ For he said that God had by His works, laid open His invisible power to their understanding, there also he said that they did not worship Him aright, but gave the divine honours which were His peculiarly, unto other things than was lawful: "because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful: but became vain in their own imaginations: O their foolish heart was full of darkness! For professing themselves wise, they proved fools, and turned the glory of the incorruptible God, into the similitude of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and beasts, and serpents."⁴ In this place the Romans, Grecians, Egyptians, and all that gloried in their wisdom, are justly taxed. But they and we will argue this hereafter: as for those things wherein we and they consent, as of one God the Creator of this universe, who is not only incorporeal, above all bodies, but also incorruptible above all spirits, our beginning, our light and our goodness, in these we prefer them before all others.

CHAPTER X.

What the excellence of a religious Christian is in these philosophical arts.

Now if a Christian for want of reading, cannot use such of their words as fits disputations, because he never heard of them: or cannot call that part that treats of nature, either natural in Latin, or physical in Greek: nor that which inquires the truth, rational or logical: nor that which concerns rectifying of manners and goodness of ends, moral, or ethical: yet thence it follows not that he knows not, that from the true God is both nature, whereby He made us like His image, reason, whereby we know Him, and grace, whereby we are blessed in being

¹ Coloss. ii. 8.

² Rom. i. 19, 20.

³ Acts xvii. 28.

⁴ Rom. i. 21, 22, 23.

united to Him. This then is the cause why we prefer these before the other: the other spent their wits in seeking out the causes of things, the means of learning, and order of life: these knowing God, found that there was both the cause of the whole creation, the light of all true learning, and the fount of all felicity. So that what Platonists or others soever held thus of God, they held as we do. But we choose rather to deal with the Platonists than others, because their works are most famous; for both the Greeks (whose language is very greatly esteemed of the nations) do preserve and extol them, and the Latins, moved by their excellence and glory, learning them more willingly themselves, and by recording them in their tongues also, left them the more illustrious and plain to us, and to all posterity.

CHAPTER XI.

Whence Plato might have that knowledge that brought him so near the Christian doctrine.

Now some of our Christians admire at these assertions of Plato coming so near to our belief of God: so that some think that at his going to Egypt, he heard the prophet Jeremiah, or got to read some of the prophet's books in his travel: these opinions I have elsewhere related. But by all true chronicles' supputation, Plato was born a hundred years after Jeremiah prophesied. Plato lived eighty-one years, and from his death to the time that Ptolemy, king of Egypt, demanded the Hebrew prophecies, and had them translated by the seventy Jews that understood the Greek also, is reckoned almost sixty years. So that Plato in his travel, could never see Jeremiah, being dead, nor read the scriptures, being not as yet translated into the Greek, which he understood, unless (as he was of an indefatigable study) he had had them read by an interpreter, yet so as he might not translate them, or copy them (which Ptolemy as a friend might entreat, or as a king, command), but only carry away what he could in his memory. Some reason there is for this, because Genesis begins thus:—"In the beginning God created heaven and earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the waters."¹ And Plato in his "Timæus" says that God first joined the earth and the fire. Now it is certain that he means heaven by fire: so that here is a correspondence with the other: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." Again he says that the two means conjoining these extremities, are water and air; this some may think he had from the other, "The Spirit of God moved upon the waters:" not

¹ Gen. i. 1, 2.

minding in what sense the scripture uses the word "Spirit," and because air is a spirit, therefore it may be, he gathered that He collected four elements from this place. And whereas he says a philosopher is a lover of God, there is nothing better squares with the holy scriptures : but that especially (which makes me almost confess that Plato wanted not these books) that whereas the angel that brought God's word to Moses, being asked what his name was that bade him go free the Israelites out of Egypt, answered his name was, "I am that I am : and thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I am hath sent me to you :"¹ as if that in comparison of that which truly is, being immutable, the things that are immutable, are not. Plato stuck hard upon this, and commended it highly : and I make a doubt whether the like be to be found in any one that ever wrote before Plato, except in that book when it was first written, so, "I am that I am, and thou shalt tell them that I am sent me to you." But wheresoever he had it, out of other books before him, or as the apostle says : "Because that which is known of God, is manifest unto them : for God hath showed it them. For the invisible things of Him, that is His eternal power and godhead, are seen by the creation of the world, being considered in His works."² This makes me choose to deal with the Platonists, in our intended question of natural theology ; namely, whether the service of one God, or many, suffice for the felicity of the life to come. For as touching the service of one or many for the helps of this temporal life, I think I have said already sufficient.

CHAPTER XII.

That the Platonists for all their good opinion of the true God, yet nevertheless held that worship was to be given to many.

THEREFORE have I chosen these before the rest, because their good opinion of the true and only God, made them more illustrious than the rest, and so far preferred by posterity, that whereas Aristotle, Plato's scholar, an excellent witted man, Plato's inferior indeed, but far above the rest ; who instituted the Peripatetic sect, that taught walking, and had many famous scholars of his sect in his master's lifetime, and after Plato's death, Speusippus, his sister's son, and Xenocrates, his beloved scholar, succeeded in his school, called the Academy, and their followers thereupon, Academics : yet the latter philosophers that liked to follow Plato would not be called Peripatetics, nor Academics, but Platonists : of which sort there were these famous Grecians, Plotine, Iamblychus,

¹ Exod. iii. 14.

² Rom. i. 19, 20.

and Porphyry: and Apuleius, an African, was famous both for his writings in the Greek and Latin tongues. But all these, and their followers, yea even Plato himself, held it fit to adore many gods.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of Plato's affirmation, that the gods were all good, and lovers of virtue.

WHEREFORE though in other points they and we do differ, yet to overpass them in this great controversy now in hand, I ask them what gods we must worship—the good, the bad, or both? nay, herein we must take Plato's assertion, that holds all the good to be good, no bad ones of them. Why then this worship is the gods, for then it is the gods, and if they be bad their godhead is gone. This being true (and what else should we believe), then down goes the opinion that affirms a necessity of appeasing the bad gods by sacrifices and invoking the good. For there are no bad gods: and the good only (if there were) must have the worship, without any other partakers. What are they then that love stage plays, and to see their own crimes, thrust into their honours and religion? Their power proves them something, but their affects convince them wicked. Plato's opinion of plays was shown in his judgment of the expulsion of poets, as pernicious and baleful to an honest state. What gods are they now that oppose Plato in defence of those plays? He cannot endure that the gods should be slandered, they cannot endure unless they be openly defaced. Nay, they added malicious cruelty to their bestial desires, depriving T. Latinus of his son, and striking him with a disease, marry when they had done as they pleased, then they freed him from his malady. But Plato very wisely forbade all fear of the evil powers, and confirming himself in his opinion, feared not to avow the expulsion of all these politic absurdities, from a firm state, all those filthinesses that those gods delighted in. And this Plato does Labeo make a semi-god: even that Labeo that holds that sad, black and bloody sacrifices do fit the evil gods, and mirthful orgies the good. Why then dares Plato, but a semi-god, boldly debar the gods themselves, the very good ones, from those delights which he held obscene and unlawful? These gods, nevertheless, confute Labeo, for they showed themselves cruel and barbarous against Latinus, not mirthful nor gamesome. Let the Platonists, that hold all the gods to be good and in virtue the fellows of the wise, and affirm it a sacrilege to believe other of them, let them expound us this mystery: we will, say they: mark us well we do so.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of such as held three kinds of reasonable souls : in the gods, in airy spirits, and in men.

ALL reasonable creatures (say they) are threefold : gods, men, devils, the gods the highest, then the devils, lastly, men : the first having place in heaven, the second in the air, the third on the earth : each with his change of place, has difference in nature. The gods are of more power than the spirits, or men ; and men are under the spirits and gods, both by place of nature and worth of merit ; the spirits, in the midst, are under the gods and so their inferiors. Above men in place, and therefore in power with the gods, they are immortal, with men passionate, and therefore lovers of loose sports and poetical figments, and are subject to all human affects, which the gods by no means can be. So Plato's prohibition of poetry did not deprive the gods of their delights, but only the airy spirits. Well, of this question divers, but Apuleius, a Platonist of Madaura, chiefly in one whole work, disputes, calling it *De deo Socratis*, of Socrates' god, where he disputes what kind of god this power that Socrates had attendant upon him was. It was as his friend, and forbade him to proceed in any action which he knew would not end prosperously. Now there he plainly affirms that this was no god, but only an airy spirit, handling Plato's doctrine rarely concerning the height of the gods, man's meanness, and the devil's middle interposition. But this being thus, how durst Plato deprive (not the gods, for them he acquitted from all touch of human affects) but then the airy spirits of their stage pleasures by expelling of poets ? unless by this act he meant to warn man's soul however here enchained in corruption, yet to detest the impure and impious foulness of these devils, even for honesty's sake ? for if Plato's prohibition and proof be just, then is their demand and desire most damnable. So either Apuleius mistook the kind of Socrates' genius, or Plato contradicts himself, now honouring those spirits and straight after abridging them their pleasures, and expelling their delights from an honest state ; or else Socrates' spirit was not worth the approving, wherein Apuleius offended in being not ashamed to style his book *De deo Socratis*, of his god, and yet proves by his own distinction of *Dii et dæmones*, that he should have called it *De dæmone Socratis*, of his devil. But this he had rather profess in the body of his discourse than in his title, for the name of a demon was by good doctrine brought into such hate, that whosoever had read demon in the title ere he had read the demons' commendations in the book, would have thought Apuleius mad. And what found he praiseworthy in them, but their subtle, durable bodies, and elevation of place. When he came to their conditions in general, he found no good, but spake much

evil of them : so that he that reads that book will never marvel at their desiring plays, and that such gods as they should be delighted with crimes, beastly shows, barbarous cruelty, and whatever else is horrible or ridiculous, that all this should square with their affects, is no wonder.

CHAPTER XV.

That neither the airy spirits' bodies, nor height of place, make them excel men.

WHEREFORE God forbade that a soul that fears God should think those spirits to excel it because they have more perfect bodies. So should beasts excel us also, many of which go beyond us in quickness of sense, nimbleness, swiftness, strength, and long life. What man sees like the eagle or vulture, smells like to the dog, is swifter than stags, hares, and birds? strong as a lion or an elephant, or lives with the serpent, that with his skin puts off his cares and becomes young again. But as we excel these in understanding, so do we the airy spirits in just living, or should do at least. For therefore has the high providence given them bodies in some sort excelling ours, that we might have the greater care to preserve, and augment that wherein we excel them, rather than our bodies; and learn to condemn that bodily perfection which we know they have, in respect of the goodness of life, whereby we are before them, and shall obtain immortality of body also, not for the eternity of plagues to afflict, but which purity of soul shall effect. And for the higher place, they having the air and we the earth, it were a ridiculous consequence to make them our betters in that: for so should birds be by the same reason. Aye, but birds being tired, or lacking meat, come down to earth to rest or to feed, so do not the spirits. Well, then, will you prefer them before us, and the spirits before them? if this be a mad position, as mad a consequence it is to make them excel us by place, whom we can, nay must, excel by piety. For as the birds of the air are not preferred before us, but subjected to us for the equity of our reason, so though the devils, being higher than we, are not our betters, because air is above earth; but we are their betters, because our faith far surmounts their despair. For Plato's reason dividing the elements into four, and parting movable fire and immovable earth by interposition of air and water, giving each an equal place above the other, this proves that the worth of creatures depends not upon the placing of the elements. And Apuleius, making a man an earthly creature, yet prefers him before the water creatures, whereas Plato puts the water above the earth, to show that the worth of creatures is to be discerned by another method than the posture of natural bodies: the meaner body may include the better soul, and the perfecter the worse.

CHAPTER XVI.

What Apuleius the Platonist held concerning the qualities of those airy spirits.

THIS same Platonist, speaking of their qualities, says, "that they are (as men) subject to passions of anger, delight, glory, inconstancy in their ceremonies, and fury upon neglect." Besides, "to them belong divinations, dreams, auguries, prophecies, and all magicians' miraculous works." Briefly he defines them, things "created, passive, reasonable, aerial, eternal:" in the three first they participate with us: in the fourth with none, in the fifth with the gods: and two of the first the gods share with them also. For the gods (says he) are creatures: and giving each element to his proper inhabitants, he gives earth to men, and the other creatures: water to the fishes, &c.: air to these spirits, and ether to the gods. Now in that the spirits are creatures, they communicate both with men and beasts, in reason with gods and men, in eternity with gods only, in passion with men only, in airy essence with none. So that they are creatures is nothing: for so are beasts: in that they are reasonable, so are we, equally: in that they are eternal, what is that without felicity: temporal happiness excels eternal misery. In that they are passive, what get they by that? so are we, and were we not wretched we should not be so: in that their bodies are airy, what of that, seeing a soul of any nature is preferred before a body of what perfection soever? And therefore the honour given by the soul, is not due to the soul's inferior. But if that amongst these spirits' qualities he had reckoned wisdom, virtue, and felicity, and have made them communicate these with the gods, then had he spoken somewhat worth noting, yet ought we not to worship them as God, for these ends, but rather we should know Him of whom they had these good gifts. But as they are, how far are they from worth of worship, being reasonable to be wretched, passive to be wretched, eternal to be ever wretched? wherefore to leave all and insist on this only which I said those spirits shared with us, that is passion, if every element has his creatures, fire and air immortals, earth and water mortals, why are these spirits subject to perturbations? (to that which the Greeks call *πάθος*, whence our word passion is derived: word of word, *πάθος*, and passion, being a motion of the mind against reason). Why are these in these spirits that are not in beasts? for the appearance of such in beasts is no perturbation, because it is not against reason, which the beast wants. And that it is a perturbation in men, their foolishness or their wretchedness is cause. For we cannot have that perfection of wisdom in this life that is promised us after our acquittance from mortality. Now the gods they say cannot suffer those perturba-

tions, because that their eternity is conjoined with felicity : and this they affirm the reasonable soul that is absolutely pure, enjoys also. So then if the gods be free from passion, because they are creatures blessed, and not wretched : and the beasts, because they are creatures, neither capable of blessedness nor wretchedness : it remains that these spirits be perturbed like men, only because they are creatures not blessed but wretched.

CHAPTER XVII.

Whether it becomes a man to worship those spirits from whose guilt he should be pure.

WHAT fondness then, nay, what madness, subjects us unto that religion of devils, when as by the truth of religion we should be saved from participation of their vices? for they are moved with wrath (as Apuleius for all his adoring and sparing them affirms) : but true religion bids us not to yield to wrath, but rather resist it. They are won with gifts, we are forbidden to take bribes of any. They love honours, we are prohibited all honours' affectation. They are haters of some, and lovers of some, as their affects transport them : truth teaches us to love all, even our very enemies.¹ Briefly, all the intemperance of mind, passions and perturbations, which the truth affirms of them, it forbids us. What cause is then but thine own lamentable error, for thee to humble thyself to them in worship, whom thou seekest to oppose in uprightness of conversation? and to adore those thou hatest to imitate, when as all religion teaches us to imitate those we adore.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of that religion that teaches that those spirits must be men's advocates to the good gods.

IN vain therefore did Apuleius and all of his opinion, honour them so as to place them in the air, and because God and man (as Plato says) have no immediate commerce, these are the carriers of men's prayers to the gods, and their answers to men. For those men thought it unfit to join the gods with men : but held the spirits fit means for both sides, to take the prayers hence and bring answers thence : that a chaste man, and one pure from magical superstition, might use them as his patrons, by whom he might send to the gods that love such things as if he forbore to use it, makes him far more fit to be heard of good deities : for

¹ Mat. v. 44.

they love stage-filth : which chastity loathes : they love all the villainies of witchcrafts which innocence abhors. Thus chastity and innocence, if they would any thing with God, must make their enemies their intercessors, or else go empty away. He may save his breath in defence of stage-plays : Plato, his highly-admired master, gives them too sore a blow : if any man be so shameless, as to delight in obscenity himself, and think it accepted also of the gods.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the wickedness of art magic, depending on these wicked spirits' ministry.

Now will I, out of the public light of all the world, bring overthrows to the arts magic, whereof some wicked and some wretched do make boast in the devil's name : why, if they be the works of the gods, are they so severely punished by the laws ? or have Christians divulged these laws against them with any other intent than to suppress a thing so generally pernicious unto all mankind ? What says that worthy poet ?

“ Testor chara deos, et te germana, tuumque
Dulce caput, magicas inuitam accingier artes.”

‘ Sister, by heaven, and thee that hearest my vows,
I would not use art magic, could I choose.’

And that which he says elsewhere—

“ Atque satas aliò vidi traducere messes.”

‘ I saw the witch transport whole fields of corn.’

In that these diabolical arts were reported of power to remove whole harvests of corn and fruits whether they pleased : was not this (as Tully says) recorded in the twelve tables of Rome's ancient laws, and a punishment proclaimed for all such as used it ? Nay, was not Apuleius himself brought before Christian judges for such practices ? If he had known them to be divine, he should have avouched them at his accusation, as congruent with the divine powers, and have convinced the opposite laws of absurd impiety, in condemning so admirable effects of the deities. For so might he either have made the judges of his mind, or if they had been refractory, and following their unjust laws put him to death, then the spirits would have done his soul as good a turn as he had deserved in dying fearlessly, for the due avouching of their powerful operations. Our martyrs, when Christianity was laid to their charge, knowing it was the tract of eternal glory, denied it not to avoid a temporal torment, but averred it constantly, bore all tortures undauntedly, and dying securely, struck shame upon the laws' foreheads

that condemned it as unlawful. But this Platonist wrote a large and eloquent oration now extant, wherein he purges himself of all touch of using these arts, and sees no means to prove his own innocence but by denying that which indeed no innocent can commit. But for all these magic miracles, he rightly condemns them, as done by the works and operations of the devils: wherefore let him look how he can justly give them divine honours, as mediators between the gods and us, when he shows their works to be wicked: and such indeed as we must avoid if we will have our prayers come near to the true God. And then what are the prayers that he affirms they do bear unto the gods? Magical or lawful? If magical, the gods will receive no such prayers: if lawful, then use they no such ministers. But if a sinner (chiefly one that has sinned in magic) repent and pray; will they carry up his prayers, or obtain his pardon that were the causers of his guilt, and whom he accuses? Or do these devils (to obtain his pardon), first repent themselves for deceiving him, and receive a pardon themselves also afterward. Nay, none will say so: for they that hope to get pardon by repentance, are far from being worthy of divine honours: for if they were desirous of them, and yet penitents also, their pride were to be detested in the first, though their humility were to be pitied in the latter.

CHAPTER XX.

Whether it be credible that good gods had rather converse with those spirits than with men.

O BUT there is a necessity binds these spirits in this place between the gods and men, to carry and recarry messages and answers from the one to the other. Well, and what necessity? Why, because no god has commerce immediately with man. Very good! O that is a glorious holiness of God surely, that converses not with a penitent, humble man, and yet will converse with a proud spirit! He has no commerce with a man that flies from succour to his death, but with a spirit that counterfeits His deity, He has: He meddles not with him that asks pardon, but with the spirit that imagines mischief He does: He deals not with philosopher that expels stage plays out of an honest city, but He deals with a devil that forces stage plays from the priests and senators, as part of the religion of a city; He likes not the men's company that forbid slanders of the gods, but the devils that delight in them, theirs He likes of. He converses not with the man that executes just laws upon magicians, but with the devils that teach magic and give it effect, those He converses with: nor is joined with a man that flies the example of the devil, yet joins with the devil that hunts for the wreck of man: this is likely sure.

CHAPTER XXI.

Whether the gods use the devils as their messengers, and be willing that they should deceive them, or ignorant that they do it.

BUT there is a great necessity of this so vile an inconvenience, because the ethereal gods (but that these spirits being upward) otherwise could not know the affairs of earth : heaven (ye know) being far from earth, and air adjoining to both. O rare wisdom ! This is their opinion, that their good gods have a care of human businesses, else were they not worth worship, and yet the distance of place debars them from noticing how things pass, but that the spirits help them : so there are they necessary : and consequently worship-worthy, as the means that the gods have to know men's cases, and to send them help in time : if this then be so, the devils' contiguous body is better known to the gods than a man's good mind. Oh lamentable necessity ! nay, ridiculous detestable vanity, to keep vanity from divinity. If the gods by their freedom from the body's obstacles can behold our minds, what need they any spirit's help ? And if the gods have corporeal means, as sight, speech, motion, or so, in bodies, by which they receive the spirit's messages, then may the spirits lie, and deceive them also. So that if the deities be not ignorant of the devils' deceits, no more are they barred the knowledge of our actions. But I would they would tell me whether the spirits told the gods that Plato disliked the slanders that the poets laid upon them, and yet concealed that they did like well of them, or concealed all, that the gods never knew it : or revealed all, Plato's religious zeal, and their own vile affection ; or did they suppress Plato's opinion that would have such impious liberty abrogated as by poetic fables did injure the gods, and yet shamed not to lay open their own wickedness in affecting such plays as contained the gods' disgraces : choose of these four which they will, and mark the sequel. How vilely they thought of these good gods. If they choose the first, then it is granted that the gods might not converse with good Plato that restrained their shames, and yet conversed with those evil spirits that rejoiced at these injuries of the gods, who could not know a good man, being afar, but by these devils, because they could not know these devils that were so near them. If they take the second, and say the spirits concealed both, that the gods should neither know Plato's religious law, and the devils' sacrilegious practice, what use can the gods have of these messengers for any knowledge, seeing they could not have knowledge of the good laws that honest men promulgated in their honour against the lust of those vile spirits ! If they choose the third and make these spirits both to celebrate Plato's prohibition of the gods' injuries, and

their own affectation of their continuance : why were not this rather to over-crow them, than to interpret to them? And so should the gods hear and judge of both these relations, that they neither should cashier these spirits of their service, that opposed Plato's good zeal, nor forbear to send Plato rewards by them, for his honest intent. For so are they placed in the chain of nature's elements, that they may have the company of those that injure them, but not of those that defend them : both they may know, but the states of air and earth they cannot alter, nor transmute. Now if they choose the fourth, it is worse than all. For who can endure the devils should tell the gods how they are abused by players and poets, and of the height of pleasure themselves take in these shows, and yet be silent of Plato's grave decree that abrogated all such obscenities? that so the good gods might have intelligence of the wickedness of the worst : their own messengers ; and yet none of the philosophers' goodnesses, that aimed all at their honour, whereas the other professed their extreme disgrace.

CHAPTER XXII.

The renouncing of the worship of those spirits against Apuleius.

To avoid therefore all evil thoughts concerning the gods, all the four are to be avoided : nor must we at all believe what Apuleius would have us, and others with him, that the *dæmones* are so placed between the gods and men, that they bear up men's prayers, and bring down the gods' helps : but that they are spirits most thirsty of mischief, wholly unjust, proud, envious, treacherous, inhabiting the air indeed, as thrust out of the glorious heaven for their unpardonable guilt, and condemned eternally to that prison. Nor are they above man in merit because air is above earth, for men do easily excel them, not in quality of body, but in the faith and favour of the true God. Indeed they rule over many that are not worthy of the participation of gods' truth : such are their subjects, won to them by false miracles, and by illusions persuading them that they are gods. But others that looked more narrowly into them and their qualities, would not believe this that they were gods, only they got this place in their opinion, to be held the gods' messengers, and bringers of men's good fortunes. Yet those that held them not gods, would not give them the honour of gods because they saw them evil, and held all gods to be good : yet durst they not deny them all divine honours, for fear of offending the people, whose inveterate superstition preserved them in so many temples, altars, and sacrifices.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Hermes Trismegistus' opinion of idolatry, and how he might come to know that the Egyptian superstitions were to be abrogated.

FOR HERMES the Egyptian, called Trismegistus, wrote contrary to these. Apuleius indeed holds them no gods, but middle agents between gods and men : that being so necessary, he conjoins their adoration with the divine worship. But Trismegistus says, that the high God made some gods, and men other some. These words as I write them, may be understood of images, because they are the works of men. But he calls visible and palpable bodies, the bodies of the gods : wherein are spirits (invited in thereto) that have power to hurt or pleasure such as give them divine honours. So then, to combine such a spirit invisible, by arts unto a visible image of some certain substance, which it must use as the soul does the body, this is, to make a god, says he, and this wonderful power of making gods, is in the hands of man. His words are these : "And whereas our discourse," says he, "concerns the affinity between gods and men, mark (Asclepius) this power of man : our God the Lord and Father, is the creator of the celestial gods, so is man of the terrestrial, which are in the temples." And a little after : "So doth humanity remember the original, and ever striveth to imitate the deity : making gods like the one image, as God the Father hath done like His." "Do you mean statues?" replied Asclepius. "Statues," quoth he, "do you not see them animate, full of spirits and sense (trust your eyes), doing such wonders? see you not statues that presage future events (far perhaps beyond all prophetic inspiration to foretell), that cure diseases and cause them, giving men mirth or sadness, as they deserve? Know you not, Asclepius, that Egypt is heaven's image, or rather the place whereinto all the celestial graces descend, the very temple of the whole world. And since wisdom should foreknow all, I would not have you ignorant herein. The time shall come that all the zeal of Egypt shall be abrogated, and all the religious observations held idle and vain." Then goes he forward, prophesying (by all likelihood) of Christianity, whose true sanctity is the utter subversion of all fictions and superstitions : that the Saviour's true grace might free us from those human gods, those handiworks of man, and place us in God's service, man's maker. But Hermes presages these things as the devil's confederate, suppressing the evidence of the Christian name, and yet foretelling with a sorrowful intimation, that from it should proceed the wreck of all their idolatrous superstitions : for Hermes was one of those who (as the apostle says), "Knowing God, glorified Him not as God, nor were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their

foolish heart was full of darkness: when they professed themselves wise, they became fools. For they turned the glory of the incorruptible God into the similitude of the image of a corruptible man,"¹ and birds, and four-footed beasts, and serpents. For this Hermes says much of God according to truth; but how blindness of heart draws him to affirm this, I know not, that these gods should be always subject, whom man has made: and yet to bewail their abrogations to come. As if man could be more miserable any way, than in living slave to his own handiwork: it being easier for him to put off all humanity in adoring these pieces he has made, than for them to put on deity by being made by him. For it comes oftener to pass that a man being set in honour, be not understood to be like to the beasts, than that his handiwork should be preferred before the work that God made like His own image, to wit, man's self. Worthily then does he fall from His grace that made him, that makes that his lord which he has made himself. Those vain, deceitful, pernicious sacrileges, Hermes' foreseeing should perish, deplores, but as impudently as he had known it foolishly. For the Spirit of God had not spoken to him as it did to the prophets, that spoke this with gladness. "If a man make gods, behold they are no gods:" and in another place: "At that day," says the Lord, "I will take the names of their idols from the earth, and there shall be no remembrance thereof." And to the purpose of Egypt, hear Isaiah. "The idols of Egypt shall be moved at His presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of her,"² and so forward. Such were they also that rejoiced for the fulfilling of that which they knew should come to pass: as Simeon, Anna, and Elizabeth, the first knowing Christ at His birth, the second at His conception:³ and Peter, that by God's inspiration said, "Thou art that Christ the Son of the living God."⁴ But Hermes had his knowledge from those devils, that trembling in the flesh said to Christ: "Why art thou come to undo us before the time:"⁵ either because that came suddenly upon them which they expected not until afterwards, or that they called it their undoing to be known, and so despised: and this was before the time, that is, the judgment wherein they, and all men their sectaries, are to be cast into eternal torments: as that truth says, that neither deceives nor is deceived; not as he says that, following the puffs of philosophy, flies here and there, mixing truth and falsehood, grieving at the overthrow of that religion which afterwards he affirms is all error.

Rom. i. 21, 22, 23.

⁴ Matt. xvi. 16.

² Isaiah xix. 1.

⁵ Matt. vii. 29.

³ Luke i.

CHAPTER XXIV.

How Hermes openly confessed his progenitors' error, and yet bewailed the destruction of it.

FOR after much discourse, he comes again to speak of the gods men made: but of these sufficient (says he): let us return again to man, and to reason, by which divine gift man has the name of reasonable. For we have yet spoken no wonderful thing of man: the wonder of all wonders is that man could find out the divine nature, and give it effect. Wherefore our fathers erring exceedingly in incredulity concerning the deities, and never penetrating into the depth of divine religion, they invented an art, to make gods, whereunto they joined a virtue out of some part of the world's nature, like to the other: and conjoining these two, because they could make no souls, they framed certain images whereunto they called either angels, or devils, and so by these mysteries gave these idols power to hurt or help them. I know not whether the devils being admired would say as much as this man says. Our fathers exceedingly erring (says he) in incredulity concerning the deities, and not penetrating into the depth of divine religion, invented an art to make gods. Was he content to say they but erred, in this invention? no, he adds, *exceedingly*; thus this exceeding error and incredulity of those that looked not into matters divine, gave life to this invention of making gods. And yet though it were so, though this was but an invention of error, incredulity, and irreligiousness, yet this wise man laments that future times should abolish it. Mark now whether God's power compels him to confess his progenitors' error, and the devils to be made the future wreck of the said error. If it were their exceeding error, incredulity, and negligence in matters divine that give first life to this god-making invention, what wonder if this art be detestable, and all that it did against the truth cast out from the truth, this truth correcting that error, this faith that incredulity, this conversion that neglect? If he conceal the cause, and yet confess that right to be their invention, we (if we have any wit) cannot but gather that had they been in the right way, they would never have fallen to that folly: had they either thought worthily, or meditated seriously of religion, yet should we affirm that their great incredulous, contemptuous error in the cause of divinity, was the cause of this invention, we should nevertheless stand in need to prepare ourselves to endure the impudence of the truth's obstinate opponents. But since he that admires the power of this art above all other things in man, and grieves that the time should come wherein all those illusions should clasp with ruin, through the power of legal authority: since he confesses the causes

that give this art first original, namely the exceeding error, incredulity, and negligence of his ancestor in matters divine: what should we do but think God has overthrown these institutions by their just contrary causes? that which error's multitude ordained, has truth's tract abolished: faith has subverted the work of incredulity, and conversion unto God's truth has suppressed the effects of true God's neglect: not in Egypt only (where only the diabolical spirit bewails) but in all the world, which hears a new song sung unto the Lord, as the Holy Scripture says, "Sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth:"¹ for the title of this psalm is, when the house was built after the captivity: the City of God, the Lord's House is built, that is the Holy Church all the earth over: after captivity wherein the devils held those men slaves, who after by their faith in God became principal stones in the building: for man's making of these gods, did not acquit him from being slave to these works of his, but by his willing worship he was drawn into their society: a society of subtle devils, not of stupid idols: for what are idols but as the Scripture says, have eyes and see not, and all the other properties that may be said of a dead senseless image, how well soever carved. But the unclean spirits, therein by that truly black art, bound their souls that adored them, in their society, and most horrid captivity: therefore says the apostle: "We know that an idol is nothing in the world: but the Gentiles offer to devils and not unto God: I will not have them to have society with the devils."² So then after this captivity that bound men slave to the devils, God's house began to be built through the earth: thence had the psalm the beginning, "Sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord and praise His name, declare His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory amongst all nations, and His wonders amongst all people. For the Lord is great and much to be praised: He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols, but the Lord made the heavens." He then that bewailed the abolishment of the idols in the time to come, and of that slavery wherein the devils held men captive, did it out of an evil spirit's inspiration, and from that did desire the continuance of that captivity which being disannulled, the psalmist sung that God's house was built up through the earth. Hermes presaged it with tears; the prophet with joy, and because that spirit that the prophet spake by is ever victor: Hermes himself that bewailed their future ruin, and wished their eternity, is by a stange power compelled to confess their original from error, incredulity, and contempt of God, not from prudence, faith, and devotion. And though he call them gods, that in saying yet men did make them (and such men as we should not imitate), what does he

¹ Ps. xcvi. 1.² 1 Cor. viii. 4.

(despite his heart) but teach us that they are not to be worshipped of such men, as are not like them that made them : namely, of those that be wise, faithful, and religious : showing also that those men that made them, bound themselves to adore such gods as were no gods at all. So true is that of the prophet : "If a man make gods, behold they are no gods." Now Hermes, in calling those gods that are made by such means, that is, devils bound in idols, by an art, or rather, by their own elections, and affirming them the handiworks of men, gives them not so much as Apuleius the Platonist does (but we have shown already how grossly and absurdly), who makes them the messengers between the gods, that God made, and the men that He made also : to carry up prayers and bring down benefits : for it were fondness to think that a god of man's making could do more with the gods of God's making than a man whom He made also could. For because a devil bound in a statue by this damned art, is made a god : not to each man, but to his binder, such as he is. Is not this a sweet god now, whom none but an erroneous, incredulous, irreligious man would go about to make? furthermore if the temple-devils, being bound by art (forsooth) in those idols by them that made them gods at such time as they themselves were wanderers, unbelievers, and contemnners of God's true religion, are no messengers between the gods and them ; and if by reason of their damnable conditions, those men that do so wander, believe so little, and despise religion so much, be nevertheless their betters, as they must needs be, being their godheads' makers : then remains but this, that which they do, they do as devils only, either doing good, for the more mischief, as most deceitful, or doing open mischief : yet neither of these can they do without the high inscrutable providence of God : nothing is in their power as they are the gods' friends, and messengers to and from men : for such they are not : for the good divine powers, whom we call the holy angels, and the reasonable creatures inhabiting heaven, whether they be *thrones, dominations, principalities, or powers*, can hold no friendship at all with these spirits : from whom they differ as much in affection as virtue differs from vice, or malice from goodness.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of such things as may be common to angels and men.

WHEREFORE the devils are no means for man to receive the gods' benefits by, or rather good angels : but it is our good wills, imitating theirs, making us live in one community with them and in honour of that one God that they honour (though we see not them with our earthly eyes) that is the means to their society : and whereas our miserable frailty of

will, and infirmity of spirit effects a difference between them and us, therein we are far short of them, in merit of life, not in habit of body. It is not our earthly, bodily habitation, but our unclean carnal affection, that causes separation between them and us. But when we are purified, we become as they : drawing near them nevertheless before, by our faith, if we believe that (by their good favours also) He that blessed them will make us also blessed.

CHAPTER XXVI.

That all Paganism was fully contained in dead men.

BUT mark what Hermes, in his bewailing of the expulsion of these idols out of Egypt, which had such an erroneous incredulity and irreligious institutors, says amongst the rest, then (says he) "that holy seat of temples shall become a sepulchre of dead bodies." As if men should not die unless these things were demolished, or being dead should be buried anywhere save in the earth? Truly the more time that passes, the more carcases shall still be buried and more graves made. But this (it seems) is his grief, that the memories of our martyrs should have place in their temples : that the misunderstanding reader hereof might imagine that the Pagans worshipped gods in the temples, and we dead men in their tombs. For men's blindness so carries them headlong against mountains, letting them not see till they be struck, that they do not consider that in all Paganism, there cannot be a god found but has been a man : but on will they, and honour them as eternally pure from all humanity. Let Varro pass, that said, "all that died were held gods infernal," proving it by the sacrifices done at all burials, there also he reckons the funeral plays, as the greatest token of their divinity, plays being never presented but to the gods. Hermes himself (now mentioned) in his deplorative presage, saying : "Then that holy seat of temples shall become a sepulchre of dead bodies," plainly avers that the Egyptian gods were all dead men : for having said that his fathers in their exceeding error, incredulity, and neglect of religion, had found a means to make gods hereunto (says he), they added a virtue out of some parts of the world's nature, and conjoining these two, because they could make no souls, they framed certain images, into which they called either angels or devils, and so by these mysteries gave those idols power to hurt or help them. Then he proceeds to examples. "Thy grandfather (Asclepius)," saith he, "the first inventor of physic, has a temple on mount Lybia, near the crocodile shore : there lies his worldly man, his body, but his residue or his whole (if man be whole life) has gone up to heaven, helping all sick persons now by his deity as

he did before by his physic." Lo here he confesses a dead man worshipped for a god, there where his grave was : erring and making others err, in saying, "that he was ascended to heaven, and helpeth all sick persons by his deity." Nay, he proceeds to another. "My grandfather Hermes," says he, "lying in the town of his surname, doth he not assist and preserve all that implore his help." This was Hermes, the elder Mercury, buried (they say) in Hermopolis, the town of his surname. Behold now, here are two men gods already, Æsculapius and Mercury, for the first the opinion of both Greeks and Latins confirm it. But the second many think was never mortal : yet he says here that he was his grandfather, for this is one and that another, though both have one name. But this I stand not upon : he and Æsculapius were both made gods of men, by this great testimony of his nephew Trismegistus, who proceeds, and says "Isis, the wife of Osiris, doth much good (we see), being pleased, and being offended, much evil." And then to show that these are of that kind of gods that men make by this art, he gives us to understand, that he thinks those devils to be souls of dead men, which he says those erring, incredulous, irreligious fellows called by art into statues : because these could make no souls : and when he has spoken that of "Isis, being offended, much hurt," he adds : for earthly and worldly gods are soon offended, and moved to anger by reason they consist of men, in both their natures : both their natures (saith he), taking the devil for the soul, and the image for the body, whereupon it came to pass (says he) that such and such creatures became holy in Egypt, and their souls were adored in all the cities, that consecrated them in their lives, so far that they have part of their worship assigned them, and are called by their names. Where is now that sad complaint that Egypt, the seat of temples, should become a grave for carcases ? see, the false spirit that made Hermes speak it, made him also confess that it was already filled with their carcases whom they held as gods. But in his complaint he was but the vent of the devils' woe, because their eternal plagues were in preparing by the martyrs' holy memories, for in such places are they often tormented and forced to confess themselves, and to avoid the bodies possessed.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of the honour that Christians give to the martyrs.

YET we erect no temples, altars, nor sacrifices to the martyrs, because not they, but their God, is our God ; we honour their memories, as God's saints, standing till death for the truth, that the true religion might be propagated, and all idolatry demolished : whereas if any others had believed right before them, yet fear forbade them confess it. And who

has ever heard the priest at the altar, that was built up in God's honour, and the martyrs' memories, say over the body, I offer unto thee, Peter, or unto thee, Paul, or Cyprian? he offers to God, in the places of their memorials, whom God had made men, and martyrs, and advanced them into the society of His angels in heaven, that we at that solemnity may both give thanks to God for their victories, and be encouraged to endeavour the attainment of such crowns and glories as they have already attained: still invoking Him at their memorials: wherefore all the religious performances done there, at the martyrs' solemnities, are ornaments of their memories, but no sacrifices to the dead, as unto gods, and those that bring banquets thither, which notwithstanding the better Christians do not, nor is this custom observed in most places, yet, such as do so, setting them down, praying over them, and so taking them away to eat, or bestow on those that need: all this they do only with a desire that these meats might be sanctified, by the martyrs, in the God of martyrs' name. But he that knows the only sacrifices that the Christians offer to God, knows also that these are no sacrifices to the martyrs; wherefore we neither worship our martyrs with God's honours nor men's crimes, neither offer them sacrifices nor turn their disgraces into any religion of theirs; as for Isis, Osiris' wife, and the Egyptian goddess and her parents, that have been recorded to have been all mortal, to whom she sacrificing found three grains of barley, and showed it unto her husband and Hermes, her counsellor: and so they will have her to be Ceres also, what gross absurdities are hereof recorded, not by poets, but their own priests (as Leon showed to Alexander and he to his mother Olympia), let them read that list, and remember that have read: and then but consider, unto what dead persons and dead persons' works their divinest honours were exhibited. God forbid they should in the least respect compare them with our martyrs, whom nevertheless we account no gods; we make no priests to sacrifice unto them, it is unlawful, indecent, and God's proper due: neither do we please them with their own crimes, or obscene spectacles: whereas they celebrate both the guilt that their gods incurred who were men, and the feigned pleasures of such of them as were flat devils. If Socrates had had a god, he should not have been of this sort: but such perhaps as loved to excel in this damnable art of making gods, thrust such an one upon him, being an innocent honest man, and unskilful in this their pernicious practice. What need we more? none that has his wits about him will now hold that these spirits are to be adored for the attainment of eternal bliss in the life to come. Perhaps they will say that all the gods are good, but, of these spirits some are good and some bad: and that by those that are good we may come to eternity, and therefore ought to adore them: well, to rip up this question, the next book shall serve the turn.



THE NINTH BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

The scope of the afore-passed disputation, and what is remaining to treat of.

IN these controversies of the gods, some have held deities of both natures, good and evil: others (of better minds) did the gods that honour to hold them all good. But those that held the first, held the airy spirits to be gods also, and called them gods, as they called the gods, spirits, but not so ordinarily. Indeed they confess that Jove, the prince of all the rest, was by Homer called a *dæmon*. But such as affirmed all the gods were good ones, and far better than the best men, are justly moved by the arts of the airy spirits, to hold firmly that the gods could do no such matters, and therefore of force there must be a difference between them and these spirits: and that what ever unpleasant affect, or bad act they see caused, wherein these spirits do show their secret power, that they hold is the devil's work, and not the gods'. But yet because they place these spirits as mediators between their gods and men (as if God and man had no other means of commerce), to carry and recarry prayers and benefits from the one to the other, this being the opinion of the most excellent philosophers the Platonists, with whom I choose to discuss this question, whether the adoration of many gods be helpful to eternal felicity? In the last book we disputed how the devils (delighting in that which all wise and honest men abhor, as in the foul, enormous, irreligious fictions of the gods' crimes (not men's), and in the damnable practice of magic), can be so much nearer to the gods, that men must make them the means to attain their favours: and we found it utterly impossible. So now this book (as I promised in the end of the other), must not concern the difference of the gods betwixt themselves (if they make any such), nor the difference of the gods and spirits (the one being far distant from men (as they say), and the other in the midst between the gods and men), but of the difference of these spirits amongst themselves. This is the present question.

CHAPTER II.

Whether amongst the spirits of the air that are under the gods, there be any good ones, that can further a man in the attainment of true blessedness.

FOR many use to say there are some good devils and some bad : but whether this opinion be Plato's or whosoever, it is not to be omitted ; because no man shall be deluded in honouring those spirits as if they were good, or such as whiles he thinks should by their place be a mean of reconciliation betwixt them and the gods, and desires their furtherance, to be with them after death, do inveigle him and draw him in with deceit, quite from the true God, with whom only and in whom only, and from whom only, every reasonable soul, must expect and enjoy beatitude.

CHAPTER III.

What qualities Apuleius ascribes to the devils, to whom he gives reason but no virtue.

How is this difference of good and evil then extant, when as Apuleius the Platonist, disputing so much hereof, and attributing so much to those airy powers, yet never speaks a word of their virtues, which he would have done if they had had any? He shows not the cause why they are happy, but the signs of their misery he opens at full : confessing that though they have reason, they want virtue, that do not give way to unreasonable passions, but (as fools used to be) they are often perturbed with tempestuous and unquiet motions. His words are these : "Of these *dæmones*, the poets (not much amiss) do feign some to be haters, and some lovers of some particular men : preferring some, and dejecting others ; so that pity, anger, joy, and all human affects are easily accidents unto them : and so is their mind exposed to the dominion of all perturbations, which the gods (whose minds are quiet, and retired) are not." Here you hear plainly that the devils' souls as well as mortals' are subject to all disturbance of passion, and thereby not to be compared unto wise men, who can curb and suppress those exorbitant affects, however accident unto them by reason of their humanity ; giving then no predominance to work any unreasonable effect, opposite to justice : but they are more like (not to say worse) unto fools, and wicked persons, not in bodies, but qualities ; elder they are indeed, and incurably tortured, still floating in the sea of perturbation, having no hold at all of verity, or virtue, which are the means to repress all outrageous affections.

CHAPTER IV.

The opinions of the Stoics and Peripatetics concerning perturbations of the mind.

CONCERNING motions of the mind which the Greeks call *πάθη*, and some of us (with Tully), *perturbations*, others *affects*, or *affections*, and some more expressly from the Greek, *passions*, there be two opinions of the philosophers : some say they may befall a wise man, yet so as they are still awed by reason, and by the rule of the mind, obliged to what conditions discretion imposes. The holders of this are Platonists, or Aristotelians, for Aristotle, the first Peripatetic, was Plato's scholar. But others (as the Stoics) exempt a wise man from any touch of those passions. And those, Tully, in his books "*De Finibus*," proves to be rather materially than formally opposite unto the Platonists or Peripatetics : because the Stoics will not admit the external helps of the body, or estate, to the name of goods, reserving that only for virtue, as the art of living, fixed in the mind. But the others, following the common fashion, call them goods, many of small value in respect of virtue : so then howsoever they differ in their name, they concur in their esteem, nor do the Stoics show anything in this controversy but novelty of phrase : so that I hold directly, that in this question, whether a wise man may have passions of mind or not, their controversy is rather verbal, than real : for I am persuaded they are just of the Platonists' and Peripatetics' mind herein, though their words pretend a difference. This proof, I will show fair to avoid the tediousness of a longer discourse. A. Gellius, an eloquent and excellent scholar, writes in his "*Noctes Atticæ*," that he was at sea in the company of a famous Stoic. This philosopher (as Gellius tells at large, but I in brief) seeing the ship in great peril by reason of a dangerous and dreadful tempest, was pale for very fear : which some that were by (being even in the chaps of death so curiously observe whether the philosopher were perturbed or not) did perceive ; the storm ending, and fear letting men's tongues loose, a rich glutton of Asia fell a scoffing the Stoic for being so terribly afraid of that brunt which himself had passed without any passions at all : but he replied as Aristippus the Socratist did, upon the like case, "that the other having but the soul of a base knave, needed not care for it, but he was careful for the soul of Aristippus." This answer packed away the rich chaff, and then Gellius asked the philosopher (not desiring to offend, but to learn) what was the cause of his fear. Who desiring to satisfy a man so desirous to know, he pulls out of his scrip the book of Epictetus, a Stoic, containing the Axioms of Zeno and Chrysippus, Stoicism's founders : wherein Gellius (says he) showed him this position, "That the mind's apprehensions (they call them fantasies)

arising from fearful and terrifying objects, can neither be hindered from befalling a wise man, nor from moving his mind when they do befall : that he shall fear, or be sad, a little by these passions' too hasty intrusion upon his reason : yet not so far that they leave an opinion or consent of the mind unto their effect, behind them : for this they keep free, as the difference between the fool and the wise : the fool consents to his passions : the wise man though he suffer them yet keeps his election, and his reprobation of them all, firm and free." Thus much from A. Gellius, no better, but briefer than his own relation of that which himself read in Epictetus, from the positive doctrine of the Stoics. Which being true, leaves small difference between them and other philosophers in this point of affects. For both do quit man's reason from being overruled by passion. And perhaps therefore the Stoics deny a wise man to seal them, because they alter him not, nor hurt his wisdom. But they befall him (not moving his wisdom) in the respects of the commodities or discommodities of this life which notwithstanding he will not call goods, or evils. For if the philosopher had not esteemed that which he doubted to lose by that shipwreck, namely his life and bodily safety, he would never have been pale for the matter : yet might his mind stand fixed for all that external pallor, and he still hold firm that life and bodily safety, which there he feared to lose, were not of those goods that make their possessors good, as virtue does. But in that they say they are not to be called goods at all, but only commodities, in this their mind is more upon the word than the matter. For what care is there of their name, when as their loss leaves both Stoic and Peripatetic alike affected ? proving thereby their equal esteem of them, call them what they list ? If the danger of these goods or commodities should draw either of them to mischiefs, or else to be lost : they both join in this ; rather to abjure the use of bodily benefits than to transgress the rules of justice. Thus is the mind still fixed, holding steadfastly that no passion (though it insult upon the soul's meaner parts) can domineer over reason : but reason over them, exercising virtue's sovereignty over them by opposition, nor by consent. For such an one does Virgil say *Æneas* was —

" *Mens immota manet, lachrymæ voluuntur inanes.*"

' His mind stood fixed, yet fruitless tears must out.'

CHAPTER V.

That the Christians' passions are causes of the practice of virtue, not inducers unto vice.

HERE is no need to stand upon a large discovery what the Christians' scriptures teach in this point of affects : it subjects the whole

mind to God's governance and assistance, and all the passions unto it, in that manner that they are all made to seem the increase of justice, finally our doctrine inquires not so much whether one be angry, but wherefore? Why he is sad, not whether he be sad; and so of fear? For anger with an offender, to reform him: pity upon one afflicted, to succour him: fear for one in danger, to deliver him—these no man, not mad, can reprehend. The Stoics indeed use to reprehend pity. But that Stoic might more honestly have pitied another man's danger than have feared his own. But with far more humanity and piety, said Tully in Cæsar's praise: "Of all thy virtues, is none more admired, nor applauded, than thy mercy." What is mercy but a compassion, in our own heart, of another's misfortunes, urging us as far as our power stretches to relieve him? This affect serves reason, when our pity offends not justice, either in relieving the poor or forgiving the penitent. This that eloquent Cicero stuck not to call a virtue, which the Stoics reckon with the vices: yet does Epictetus, out of the doctrines of Zeno and Chrysippus, the first patrons of this sect, allow these passions unto a man, whom nathless they must needs keep from all vice, and consequently these passions that befall a wise man, so as they do not offer any prejudice to his reason or virtue, are no vices, and the Stoics, Platonists, and Peripatetics do all agree in one. But (as Tully says) the Grecians (of old) affect verbosity of contention rather than truth: but now it is a further question whether it be coherent unto the infirmity of this present life to suffer these affections in all good offices however, whereas the holy angels, though they punish such as God's eternal providence appoints with anger, though they help those that they love out of danger, without any fear, and succour the wretched without feeling any compassion, are notwithstanding said (after our phrase of speaking) to be partakers of those passions, because of the similitude of their works, not any way because of the infirmity of affections: and so God in the scripture is said to be angry; yet far is He from feeling affect, the effect of His revenge did procure this phrase, not the turbulence of His passion.

CHAPTER VI.

What passion the spirits that Apuleius makes mediators between the gods and men are subject unto, by his own confession.

BUT to defer the question of the holy angels awhile, let us see how the Platonists teach of their mediating spirits, in this matter of passion. If those *dæmones* overruled all their affects with freedom and reason, then would not Apuleius have said that they are tossed in the same tempestuous cogitations that men's hearts do float in. So their mind then,

their reasonable part, that if it had any virtue seated in it, should be the dominator over these turbulent affects of the inferior parts : this very mind floats (say the Platonists) in this sea of perturbation. Well, then the devils' minds lie open to the passions of lust, fear, wrath, and the rest. What part then have they free, wise, and unaffected, whereby to please the gods, and converse with good men, when as their whole mind is so subjugated unto affects, and their vices, that their whole reason is eternally employed upon deceit and illusion, as their desire to endamage all creatures is eternal ?

CHAPTER VII.

That the Platonists do but seek contentions in saying the poets defame the gods, whereas their imputations pertain to the devils, and not to the gods.

IF any say the poets' tolerable fictions, that some gods were lovers or haters of some men, were not spoken universally but restrictively, respecting the evil spirits, whom Apuleius says, "do float in a sea of turbulent thoughts : " how can this stand, when in his placing of them in the midst between the gods and us, he says not, "some for the evil, but all, because all have airy bodies" ? for this he says is a fiction of the poets that make gods of those spirits, and call them so, making them friends to such or such men, as their own loose affects do put in their heads to poetize : whereas indeed the gods are far from these in place, blessedness, and quality. This is the fiction then, to call them gods that are not so : and to set them at odds, or at amity with such or such particular men, under the titles of deities. But this fiction (says he) was not much : for though the spirits be called gods as they are not, yet they are described as they are. And thence (says he) is Homer's tale of Minerva, that stayed Achilles from striking in the midst of the Greek host. That this was Minerva, he holds it false, because she (in his opinion) was a goddess highly placed amongst the greatest deities, far from conversation with mortals. Now if it were some spirit that favoured the Greeks against Troy, as Troy had divers against them, one of whom he calls Venus, and another Mars, who indeed are higher gods than to meddle with such trifles, and if those spirits contended each for his own side, then this fiction is not far wide, says he. For it was spoken of them whom he himself has testified subject to affects, as mortal men are : so that they might use their loves and hates not according to justice, but even as the people do in huntings and courses, each one does the best for his own party : for the philosophers' care it seems was this, to prevent the imputation of such acts upon the gods (whose names the poets used) and to lay them upon the spirits, to whom of right they belonged.

CHAPTER VIII.

Apuleius' definition of the gods of heaven, spirits of air, and men of earth.

WHAT of his definition of spirits? it is universal and therefore worth inspection. They are (says he) creatures, passive, reasonable, aerial and eternal: in all which five there is no community, that those spirits have with good men, but they have it with bad also. For making a large description of man, in their place, being the last, as the gods are the first, to pass from commemoration of both their extremes, unto that which was the mean between them, viz., these devils, thus he says: "Men, joying in reason, perfect in speech, mortal in body, immortal in soul, passionate and inconstant in mind, brutish and frail in body, of discrepant conditions, and conformed errors, of impudent boldness, of bold hope, of indurate labour, and uncertain fortune, particularly mortal, generally eternal, propagating one another, short of life, slow of wisdom, sudden of death and discontented in life, these dwell on earth. In these generals (common to many) he added one, that he knew was false in few: 'slow of wisdom:' which had he omitted, he had neglected, to perfect his description. For in his description of the gods, he says, that that beatitude which men do seek by wisdom, excels in them, so had he thought of any good devils, their definition should have mentioned it, either by showing them to participate some of the gods' beatitude, or of man's wisdom. But he has no separation between them and wretches: though he be favourable in discovering their malevolent natures, not so much for fear of them, as their servants that should read his positions: to the wise he leaves his opinion open enough, and what theirs should be; both in his separation of the gods from all tempest of affect, and therein from the spirits, in all but eternity: and in his intimation that their minds were like men's, not the gods', nay, and that not in wisdom, which men may partake with the gods, but in being prone to passions, which rule both in the wicked and the witless: but is overruled by the wise man, yet so as he had rather want it, than conquer it, for if he seek to make the devils to communicate with the gods in eternity of mind only, not of body, then should he not exclude man, whose soul he held eternal, as well as the rest: and therefore he says that "man is a creature mortal in body, and immortal in soul."

CHAPTER IX.

Whether the airy spirits can procure a man the gods' friendships.

WHEREFORE, if men by reason of their mortal bodies have not that participation of eternity with the gods, that these spirits by reason of their immortal bodies have: what mediators can there be between the gods and men that in their best part, their soul, are worse than men, and better, in the worst part of a creature, the body? for, all creatures consisting of body and soul, have the soul for the better part, be it never so weak and vicious, and the body never so firm and perfect: because it is of a more excelling nature, nor can the corruption of vice deject it to the baseness of the body: but like base gold, that is dearer than the best silver, so far does it exceed the body's worth. Thus then those mediators, or posts from heaven to earth, have eternity of body with the gods and corruption of soul with the mortals, as though that religion that must make god and man to meet, were rather corporeal than spiritual! But what guilt or sentence has hung up those juggling intercedents by the heels, and the head downward, that their lower parts, their bodies, participate with the higher powers: and their higher, their souls, with the lower, holding correspondence with the gods in their servile part, and with mortals in their principal? for the body (as Sallust says) is the soul's slave: at least should be in the true use: and he proceeds: the one we have common with beasts, the other with gods: speaking of man whose body is as mortal as a beast's. Now those whom the philosophers have put between the gods and us, may say thus also: "We have body and soul, in community with gods and men:" but then (as I said) they are bound with their heels upward, having their slavish body common with the gods, and their predominant soul common with wretched men: their worst part aloft and their best underfoot, wherefore if any one think them eternal with the gods, because they never die the death with creatures, let us not understand their bodies to be the eternal palace wherein they are blessed, but the eternal prison wherein they are damned: and so he thinks as he should.

CHAPTER X.

Plotine's opinion that men are less wretched in their mortality than the devils are in their eternity.

IT is said that Plotine, that lived but lately, understood Plato the best of any. He, speaking of men's souls, says thus: "The Father out of

His mercy bound them but for a season," so that in that men's bonds (their bodies) are mortal, he imputes it to God the Father's mercy, thereby freeing us from the eternal tediousness of this life. Now the devils' wickedness is held unworthy of this favour whose passive souls have eternal prisons, not temporal as men's are, for they were happier than men, had they mortal bodies with us, and blessed souls with the gods. And men's equals were they if they had but mortal bodies to their wretched souls : and then could work themselves rest after death by faith and piety. But as they are, they are not only more unhappy than man in the wretchedness of souls, but far more in eternity of bondage in their bodies ; he would not have men to understand that they could ever come to be gods, by any grace or wisdom, seeing that he calls them eternal devils.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the Platonists that held men's souls to become dæmones after death.

HE says also that men's souls are *dæmones*, and become *lares* if their merits be good ; if evil, *lemures*, goblins ; if uncertain, *manes*. But how pernicious this opinion is to all goodness, who sees not ; for be men never so mischievous, hoping to become *lemures* or *manes*, the more desirous they are of hurt, the worse they turn into, and are persuaded that some sacrifices will call them to do mischief when they are dead, and become such : for these *Lares* (said he) are evil *dæmones* that have been men on earth. But here is another question : let it pass : he says further, the Greeks call such as they hold blessed *εὐδαίμονες*, good *dæmones* : herein confirming his position that men's souls become *dæmones* after death.

CHAPTER XII.

Of the three contraries whereby the Platonists distinguish the devils' natures from the men's.

BUT now to those creatures whom he places properly between the gods and men, being reasonable, passive, aerial, and immortal. Having placed the gods the highest, and the men the lowest, here (says he) are two of your creatures : the gods and men much differing in height of place, immortality and perfection, the habitations being immeasurably distant, and the life there eternal, and perfection here, frail and faltering : their wits advanced to beatitude, ours dejected unto misery. Here now

are three contraries between nature's two uttermost parts, the highest and the lowest : for the three praises of the gods' estate he compares with the contraries of man's. Theirs are height of place, eternity of life, perfection of nature. All these are thus opposed by him from humanity: the first, height of place, immeasurably distant from us: the second, eternity of life, poised with our frail and faltering state: the third, perfection of nature and wit, counterpoised by our wit and nature, that are dejected unto misery. Thus the gods' three, height, eternity, beatitude, are contrary in our three, baseness, mortality, and misery; now the devils being in the midway between them and us, their place is known, for that must needs be the mid-distance between the highest and the lowest. But the other two must be better looked into, whether the devils are either quite excluded from them, or participate as much of them as their middle posture require: excluded from them they cannot be, for we cannot say that they are neither happy nor wretched (as we may say that the mid-place is neither the highest nor the lowest), beasts and unreasonable creatures neither are so. But such as have reason must be the one. Nor can we say they are neither mortal nor eternal, for all things alive are one. But he has said they are eternal. It remains, then, that they have one part from the highest, and another from the lowest, so being the mean themselves. For if they take both from either, their mediocrity is overthrown, and they rely wholly upon the lower part or the higher. Seeing, therefore, they cannot want these two qualities abovesaid, their mediation arises from their partaking one with either. Now eternity from the lowest they cannot have, for there it is not: so from the highest they must have that. So then is there nothing to participate for their mediety' sake between them and mortals but misery.

CHAPTER XIII.

How the devils, if they be neither blessed with the gods nor wretched with men, may be in the mean betwixt both without participation of either.

So then, according to the Platonists, the gods are in eternal blessedness, or blessed eternity, and men are in mortal misery or miserable mortality: and the spirits of the air between both, in miserable eternity, or eternal misery. For in his five attributes given them in their definition, is none that shows (as he promised) their mediety: this community with us including their reason, their being creatures, and their being passive, and holding community with the gods only in eternity: having their airy nature, common with neither. How are they mediate then, having but one from the higher, and three from the lower? Who sees not how they are thrust from the mediate to the lower side? But thus they may

be found to be in the midst : they have one thing proper to themselves only, their airy bodies, as the gods have their celestial, and man his terrestrial ; and two things they have common to both : their being creatures and their gift of reason : for he, speaking of the gods and men, said : “ Here have you two creatures.” Nor do they affirm but that the gods have reason. Two then remains : their passiveness and their eternity, one common with the lower and the other with the higher, so being proportioned in the mean place that they decline to neither side. Thus, then, are they eternally miserable or miserably eternal. For in calling them passive he would have called them miserable, but for offending them that served them. Besides, because the world is not ruled by rash chance but by God’s providence : these spirits should never have been eternally miserable, but that they are extremely malicious : wherefore if the *eudæmons* be blessed, then is it not that they are in this mediety between gods and men. Where is their place, then, admitting their ministry between gods and men. If they be good and eternal, then they are blessed. If blessed, then not in the midst, but nearer to the gods and further from men : frustrate then is all their labour that seek to prove the mediety of those spirits being good, immortal, and blessed, between the gods immortal and blessed, and men mortal and wretched. For having beatitude and immortality, both attributes of the gods, and neither proper unto man, they must needs hold nearer correspondence with gods than men. For if it were otherwise, their two attributes should communicate with one upon either side, not with two upon one side : as a man is in the midst between a beast and an angel : a beast being unreasonable and mortal, an angel reasonable and immortal, a man mortal and reasonable, holding the first with a beast, the second with an angel, and so stands mean ; under angels, above beasts. Even so in seeking a mediety between immortality blessed, and mortality wretched, we must either find mortality blessed or immortality wretched.

CHAPTER XIV.

Whether mortal men may attain true happiness.

It is a great question whether a man may be both mortal and happy : some, considering their estate with humility, affirmed that in this life man could not be happy, others extolled themselves and avouched that a wise man was happy : which if it be so, why are not they made the means, between the immortally happy, and the mortally wretched ? Hold they their beatitude of the first, and their mortality of the latter ? Truly if they be blessed, they envy no man. For what is more wretched

than envy? And therefore they shall do their best in giving wretched mortals good counsel to beatitude, that they may become immortal after death and be joined in fellowship with the eternal blessed angels.

CHAPTER XV.

Of the Mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

BUT if that be true (which is far more probable) that all men of necessity must be miserable whilst they are mortal, then must a mean be found which is God as well as man, who by the mediation of his blessed mortality may help us out of this mortal misery unto that immortal happiness: and this mean must be born mortal, but not continue so. He became mortal not by any weakening of His deity, but by taking on Him this our frail flesh: He remained not mortal, because He raised Himself up from death: for the fruit of His mediation is, to free those whom He is mediator for, from the eternal death of the flesh: so then it was necessary for the mediator between God and us, to have a temporal mortality, and an eternal beatitude, to have correspondence with mortals by the first, and to transfer them by eternity to the second. Wherefore the good angels cannot have this place, being immortal and blessed. The evil may, as having their immortality, and our misery: and to these is the good mediator opposed, being mortal for a while, and blessed for ever, against their immortal misery. And so these proud immortals, and hurtful wretches, lest by the boast of their immortality they should draw men to misery, has He by His humble death and bountiful beatitude expelled from swaying of all such hearts as He has pleased to cleanse and illuminate by faith in Him: what mean then shall a wretched mortal, far separate from the blessed immortals, choose to attain their societies? The devils' immortality is miserable: but Christ's mortality has nothing undelectable. There we had need beware of eternal wretchedness: here we need not fear the death (which cannot be eternal), and we cannot but love the happiness which is eternal: for the mean that is immortally wretched aims all at keeping us from immortal beatitude, by persisting in the contrary misery: but the mean that is mortal and blessed, intends after our mortality to make us immortal (as He showed in His resurrection) and of wretches to make us blessed, which He never wanted. So that there is an evil mean that separates friends, and a good that reconciles them: and of the first sort are many, because the blessedness that the other multitude attains, comes all from participating of one God: whereof the miserable multitude of evil angels being deprived, who rather are opposite to hinder, than interpose to further, does all that in it lies to

withdraw us from that only one way that leads to this blessed good, namely the word of God, not made, but the maker of all : yet is He no mediator as He is the word : for so is He most blessed, and immortal, far from us miserable men. But as He is man : therein making it plain that to the attainment of this blessed, and blessing good, we must use no other mediators whereby to work : God Himself, blessed and blessing all, having graced our humanity with participation of His deity : for when He frees us from misery and mortality, He does not make us happy by participation of blessed angels but of that Trinity, in whose participation the angels themselves are blessed : and therefore when He was below the angels in form of a servant,¹ then was He also above them in form of a god : being the same way of life below, and life itself above.

CHAPTER XVI.

Whether it be probable that the Platonists say, "That the gods, avoiding earthly contagion, have no commerce with men, but by the means of the airy spirits."

FOR it is false that this Platonist says Plato said : "God hath no commerce with man :" and makes this absolute separation, the most perfect note of their glory and height. So then the devils are left to deal, and to be infected by man's conversation, and therefore cannot mundify those that infect them, so that both become unclean—the devils by conversing with men, and then men by adoration of the devils. Or if the devils can converse with men, and not be infected, then are they better than the gods : for they cannot avoid this inconvenience : for that he makes the gods peculiar, to be far above the reach of man's corruption. But God the Creator (whom we call the true God), He makes such an one (out of Plato) as words cannot describe at any hand, nay and that the wisest men in their greatest height of abstractive speculation, can have but now and then a sudden and momentary glimpse of the understanding of this God. Well then, if this high God afford His ineffable presence unto wise men, sometimes in their abstractive speculation : (though after a sudden fashion) and yet is not contaminate thereby : why then are the gods placed so far off, for fear of this contamination ? As though the sight of those ethereal bodies that light the earth were not sufficient ? And if our sight of the stars (whom he makes visible gods) do not contaminate them, then no more does it the spirits, though seen nearer hand. Or is man's speech more infectious than his sight, and therefore the gods (to keep themselves pure) receive all their requests at the delivery of the devils ? What shall I say of the other

¹ Phil. ii.

senses? Their smelling would not infect them if they were below, or when they are below as devils, the smell of a quick man is not infectious at all, if the steam of so many dead carcasses in sacrifices infect not. Their taste is not so craving of them as that they should be driven to come and ask their meat of men: and for their touch, it is in their own choice. For though handling be peculiar to that sense indeed, yet may they handle their business with men, to see them and hear them, without any necessity of touching: for men would dare to desire no further than to see and hear them: and if they should, what man can touch a god or a spirit against their wills: when we see one cannot touch a sparrow, unless he have first taken her? So then in sight, hearing, and speech, the gods might have corporeal commerce with man. Now if the devils have thus much without infection, and the gods cannot, why then the gods are subject to contamination: and not the devils? But if they be infected also, then what good can they do a man unto eternity, whom (being themselves infected) they cannot make clean, nor fit to be adjoined with the gods, between whom and men they are mediators? And if they cannot do this, what use has man of their mediation? Unless that after death they live both together corrupted, and never come near the gods: nor enjoy any beatitude, either of them. Unless some will make the spirits like to sponges, fetching all the filth from others, and retaining it in themselves: which if it be so, the gods converse with spirits that are more unclean than the man whose conversation they avoid for uncleanness' sake. Or can the gods mundify the devils from their infection, uninfected, and cannot do so with men? Who believes this that believes not the devils' illusions? Again, if the looks of man infect, then those visible gods, the world's bright eyes, and the other stars, are liable to this infection, and the devils that are not seen but when they list, in better state than they. But if the sight of man (not his) infect, then let them deny that they do see man, we seeing their beams stretched to the very earth. Their beams look uninfected through all infection, and themselves cannot converse purely with men only, though man stand in never so much necessity of their help, we see the sun's and moon's beams to reflect upon the earth without contamination of the light. But I wonder that so many learned men, preferring things intelligible evermore before sensible, would mention any corporal matter in the doctrine of beatitude. Where is that saying of Plotine: "Let us fly to our bright country, there is the father, and there is all"? What flight is that? to become like to God. If then the liker a man is to God the nearer he is also, why then the more unlike, the farther off: and man's soul, the more it looks after things mutable and temporal, the more unlike is it to that essence that is immutable and eternal.

CHAPTER XVII.

That unto that beatitude that consists in participation of the greatest good, we must have only such a mediator as Christ, not such as the devil.

To avoid this inconvenience, seeing that mortal impurity cannot attain to the height of the celestial purity, we must have a mediator, not one bodily mortal as the gods are, and mentally miserable as men are, for such an one will rather malign than further our cure ; but one adapted unto our body by nature, and of an immortal righteousness of spirit, whereby (not for distance of place but excellence of similitude) he remained above, such an one must give us his truly divine help in our cure from corruption and captivity. Far be it from this incorruptible God to fear the corruption of that man which He put on, or of those men with whom as man He conversed. For these two documents of His incarnation are of no small value, that neither true divinity could be contaminate by the flesh, nor that the devils are our betters in having no flesh ; this, as the Scripture proclaims, is the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, of whose divinity, equal with the Father, and His humanity, like unto ours : this is now no fit place to dispute.

CHAPTER XVIII.

That the devils, under colour of their intercession, seek but to draw us from God.

BUT those false and deceitful mediators, the devils, wretched in uncleanness of spirit, yet working strange effects by their aerial bodies, seek to draw us from profit of soul, showing us no way to God, but sweating to conceal that wholly from us : for in the corporal way, which is most false and erroneous ; a way that righteousness walks not (for our ascent to God must be by this spiritual likeness, not by corporal elevation), but (as I said), in this corporal way that the devils' servants dream lies through the elements, the devils are placed in the midst between the celestial gods and the earthly men, and the gods have this pre-eminence that the distance of place keeps them from contagion of man : so that rather they believe that the devils are infected by man, than he mundified by them, for so would he infect the gods (think they) but for the far distance that keeps them clean. Now who is he so wretched as to think any way to perfection, there, where the men do infect, the spirits are infected, and the gods subject to infection ? and will not rather select that way where the polluted spirits are abandoned, and men are purged from infection by that unchangeable God, and so made fit persons for the fellowship of the angels ever unpolluted.

CHAPTER XIX.

*That the word *daemon* is not used as now of any idolater in a good sense.*

BUT to avoid controversy concerning words, because some of these demon-servers, and Labeo for one, say, that whom they call demons, others call angels: now must I say somewhat of the good angels, whom indeed they deny not, but had rather call them demons than angels. But we (as Scripture, and consequently Christianity, instructs us), acknowledge angels both good and evil, but no good demons. But wheresoever in our scripture *dæmon* or *daemonium* is read, it signifies an evil and unclean spirit: and is now so universally used in that sense, that even the Pagans themselves that hold multitude of gods and demons to be adored, yet be they never such scholars, dare not say to their slave as in his praise: "thou hast a demon:" whosoever does say so, knows that he is held rather to curse than commend. Seeing therefore that all ears do so dislike this word: that almost none but takes it in ill part, why should we be compelled to express our assertion further, seeing that the use of the word *angel* will quite abolish the offence that the use of the word *demon* causes.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the quality of the devil's knowledge, whereof they are so proud.

YET the original of this name (if we look into divinity), affords somewhat worth observation, for they were called in Greek, *δαίμονες*, for their knowledge. Now the apostle, speaking in the Holy Spirit, says: "knowledge puffs up, but charity edifies:"¹ that is, knowledge is then good when it links with charity: otherwise it puffs up, that is, fills one with vainglory. So then: in the devils is this knowledge without charity, and thence they are puffed so big and so proud, that the religious honours which they well know to be God's due, they have ever arrogated to themselves, and as far as they can, do so still. Now what power the humility of Christ, that came in form of a servant, has against this devil's pride (as men deserved), domineered in their hearts, men's wretched minds being devilishly as yet puffed up, can by no means (because of their proud tumour) comprehend or conceive.

¹ 1 Cor. viii. 1.

CHAPTER XXI.

In what manner the Lord would make Himself known to the devils.

FOR the devils had this knowledge, they could say to the Lord in the flesh: "What have we to do with Thee, oh Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us before our time?"¹ Here is a plain knowledge without charity: they fear to be plagued by Him, but loved not the justice in Him. Their knowledge was bounded with His will, and His will with convenience: but they knew Him not as the angels knew Him, that participate of His deity in all eternity, but unto their terror, out of whose clutches He quit those that He had predestined to His kingdom of true eternal glory, and eternal glorious truth. The devils' therefore knew Him not as He was the life eternal, the unchangeable light, illuminating all the godly who receive that light to the purification of their hearts by faith, but they knew Him by some temporal effects of His presence, and secret signs of His virtue, which the devils' angelical senses might more easily observe than man's natural infirmity: which signs when He suppressed, the prince of devils made question of His deity, and tempted Him for the trial of His deity, trying how far He would suffer Himself to be tempted, in adapting His humanity unto our imitation. But after His temptation when the good and glorious angels (whom the devils extremely feared) came and ministered unto Him;² then the devils got more and more knowledge of Him, and not one of them durst resist His command, though He seemed infirm and contemptible in the flesh.

CHAPTER XXII.

The difference of the holy angels' knowledge and the devils'.

UNTO the good angels, the knowledge of all temporal things (that puffs up the devils), is vile: not that they want it, but in that they wholly respect the love of that God that sanctifies them, in comparison of which ineffable and unchangeable glory with the love of which they are inflamed, they condemn all that is under it, that is not it, yea and even themselves, that all their good may be employed in enjoying that only good: and so came they to a more sure knowledge of the world, viewing in God the principal causes of the world's creation, which causes do confirm this, frustrate that, and dispose of all: now the devils are far from beholding those eternal and fundamental causes in the wisdom of God, only they can extract a notion from certain secret signs which

¹ Mark i. 24.

² Matt. iv.

man is ignorant in, have more experience, and therefore may oftener presage events. But they are often deceived, marry the angels never. For it is one thing to presage changes and events from changeable and casual grounds, and to confound them by as changeable a will (as the devils are permitted to do), and another thing to foresee the changes of times, and the will of God in His eternal unalterable decrees most certain and most powerful by the participation of His divine spirit, as the angels are vouchsafed by due gradation to do. So are they eternal and blessed. He is their God that made them, for His participation and contemplation, they do continually enjoy.

CHAPTER XXIII.

That the Pagan idols are falsely called gods, yet the Scripture allows it to saints and angels.

Now if the Platonists had rather call these gods, the demons, and reckon them among those gods whom the father created (as their master Plato writes), let them do so: we will have no verbal controversy with them: if they call them immortal, and yet God's creatures, made immortal by adherence with Him, and not by themselves, they hold with us, call them what they will. And the best Platonists (if not all) have left records that thus they believed: for whereas they call such an immortal creature a god, we contend not with him, our Scriptures saying: "The God of gods, even the Lord hath spoken:"¹ again: "Praise ye the God of gods:"² again: "A great king above all gods:"³ And in that it is written: "He is to be feared above all gods:"⁴ the sequel explains it: "For all the gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the heavens." He calls him over all god, to wit, of the peoples, those that the nations called their gods being idols, therefore He is to be feared above them all, and in this fear they cried: "Art Thou come to destroy us before our time?"⁵ But whereas it is written, "The God of gods," this is not to be understood, the God of idols, or devils: and God forbid we should say, "A great King above all gods," in reference to his kingdom over devils: but the Scripture calls the men of God's family, gods, "I have said you are gods, and all children of the Most High:"⁶ of these must the "God of gods" be understood, and over these gods, is King, "The great King above all gods." But now one question: if men being of God's family, whom He speaks unto by men or angels, be called gods, how much more are they to be so

¹ Ps. l. 1.

² Ps. cxxxvi. 2.

³ Ps. xcv. 3.

⁴ Ps. xcvi. 4, 5.

⁵ Mark i. 24.

⁶ Ps. lxxxii. 6.

called that are immortal, and enjoy that beatitude which men by God's service do aim at? We answer that the Scripture rather calls men by the name of gods, than those immortal blessed creatures whose likeness was promised after death, because our unfaithful infirmity should not be seduced by reason of their super-eminence to make us gods of them: which inconvenience in man is soon avoided. And yet men of God's family are the rather called gods, to assure them that he is their God that is the God of gods: for though the blessed angels be called gods, yet they are not called the gods of gods, that is, of those servants of God of whom it is said, "You are gods, and all children of the Most High." Hereupon the apostle says: "though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be many gods, and many Lords: yet unto us there is but one God which is the Father: of whom are all things and we in Him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by Him."¹ No matter for the name then, the matter being thus past all scruple. But whereas we say from those immortal choirs, angels are sent with God's command unto men, this they dislike, as believing that this business belongs not to those blessed creatures whom they call gods, but unto the demons, whom they dare not affirm blessed but only immortal: or so immortal and blessed as good demons are, but not as those high gods whom they place so high or so far from man's infection. But (though this seem a verbal controversy) the name of a demon is so detestable, that we may by no means attribute it unto our blessed angels. Thus then let us end this book. Know all that those blessed immortals (however called) that are creatures, are no means to bring miserable man to beatitude, being from them doubly different. Secondly, those that partake immortality with them, and miserable (for reward of their malice) with us, can rather envy us this happiness, than obtain it us: therefore the favours of those demons can bring no proof why we should honour them as God, but rather that we must avoid them as deceivers. As for those whom they say are good, immortal, and blessed, calling them gods and allotting them sacrifices for the attainment of beatitude eternal, in the next book (by God's help) we will prove that their desire was to give this honour not to them, but unto that one God, through whose power they were created, and in whose participation they are blessed.

¹ 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.



THE TENTH BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

That the Platonists themselves held, that one only God was the giver of all beatitude unto men and angels : but the controversy is, whether they that they hold are to be worshipped for this end, would have sacrifices offered to themselves, or resign all unto God.

IT is perspicuous to the knowledge of all such as have use of reason, that man desires to be happy : but the great controversies arise upon the inquisition whence or how mortal infirmity should attain beatitude : in which the philosophers have bestowed all their time and study, which to relate were here too tedious, and as fruitless. He that has read our eighth book, wherein we selected with what philosophers to handle this question of beatitude, whether it were to be attained by serving one God, the Maker of the rest, or the others also, need not look for any repetitions here, having there to repair his memory : if it fail him, we choose the Platonists, as worthily held the most worthy philosophers, because as they could conceive that the reasonable immortal soul of man could never be blessed, but in participation of the light of God, the world's creator : so could they affirm that beatitude (the aim of all humanity) was unattainable without a firm adherence in pure love, unto the unchangeable One : that is, God. But because they also gave way to Pagan errors (becoming vain, as Paul says, in their own imaginations¹) and believed (or would be thought to believe) that man was bound to honour many gods, and some of them extending this honour even to devils (whom we have indifferently confuted) : it rests now to examine (by God's grace) how these immortal and blessed creatures in heaven (be they in thrones, dominations, principalities, or powers) whom they call gods, and some of them good demons, or angels, as we do, are to be believed to desire our preservation of truth in religion and piety : that is (to be more plain), whether their wills be,

¹ Rom. i. 21.

that we should offer prayer and sacrifice, or consecrate ours or ourselves unto them, or only to God, who is both their God and ours : the peculiar worship of the divinity or (to speak more expressly) the deity, because I have no one fit Latin word to express it : when I need, I will use the Greek *latría*, which our brethren (in all translation of Scripture) do translate, 'service.' But that service wherein we serve men, intimated by the apostle in these words, "Servants, be obedient to your masters,"¹ that is expressed by another Greek word. But *latría*, as our evangelists do use it either wholly or most frequently, signifies the honour due unto God. If we therefore translate it *cultus*, of *colo*, to worship or to till, we communicate it with more than God, for we worship [*colimus*] all men of honourable memory or presence : besides *colo*, in general use, is proper to things under us, as well as those whom we reverence or adore, for hence comes the word *colonus*, for a husbandman, or an inhabitant. And the gods are called *cælicolæ*, of *cælum*, heaven : and *colo*, to inhabit, not to adore, or worship, nor yet as husbandmen, that have their name from the village of the soil they possess, but as that rare Latinist says, "Urbs antiqua fuit, Tyrii tenuère coloni," *coloni* being here the inhabitants, not the husbandmen. And hereupon the towns that have been planted and peopled by other greater cities (as one hive of bees produces divers) are called colonies. So then we cannot use *colo* with reference to God without a restraint of the signification, seeing it is communicate unto so many senses : therefore no one Latin word that I know is sufficient to express the worship due unto God. For though religion signify nothing so distinctly as the worship of God, and thereupon so we translate the Greek *θρησκεία*, yet because in the use of it in Latin, both by learned and ignorant, it is referred unto lineages, affinities, and all kindreds, therefore it will not serve to avoid ambiguity in this theme : nor can we truly say, religion is nothing else but God's worship : the word seeming to be taken originally from human duty and observance. So piety also is taken properly for the worship of God, where the Greeks use *εὐσεβεία* : yet is it attributed also unto the duty towards our parents : and ordinarily used for the works of mercy, I think because God commands it so strictly, putting it in His presence for, and before sacrifices. Whence came a custom to call God pious. Yet the Greeks never call Him *εὐσεβής*, though they use *εὐσεβεία* for mercy, or piety often. But in some places (for more distinction) they choose rather to say *θεοσέβεια*, God's worship, than *εὐσεβεία*, plainly, worship, or good worship. But we have no one fit word for to express either of these. The Greek *λατρεία* we translate 'service,' but with a restraint of it only to God : their *θρησκεία* we turn it 'religion,' but still with a peculiar reference to God : their *θεοσέβεια* we have no one word

² Ephes. vi.

for, but we may call it God's worship : which we say is due only to Him that is the true God, and makes His servants gods. Wherefore if there be any blessed immortals in heaven, that neither love us, nor would have us blessed, them we must not serve : but if they both love us, and wish us happiness, then truly they wish it us from the fount whence they have it. Or shall theirs come from one stock, and ours from another.

CHAPTER II.

The opinion of Plotine the Platonist, concerning the supernal illumination.

BUT we and those great philosophers have no conflict about this question : for they well saw, and many of them plainly wrote, that both their beatitude and ours had original from the participation of an intellectual light, which they counted God, and different from themselves : this gave them all their light, and by the fruition of this they were perfect and blessed : in many places does Plotine explain Plato thus : that that which we call the soul of this universe has the beatitude from one fount with us, namely, a light which it is not, but which made it : and from whose intellectual illustration it has all the intelligible splendour. This he argues in a simile drawn from the visible celestial bodies compared with these two invisible things, putting the sun for one, and the moon for another, for the light of the moon is held to proceed from the reflection of the sun. So (says the great Platonist) the reasonable or intellectual soul, of whose nature all the blessed immortals are, that are contained in heaven, has no essence above it, but only God's that created both it, and all the world ; nor have those supernal creatures their beatitude or understanding of the truth from any other original than ours has : herein truly agreeing with the Scripture, where it is written, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John, the same came for a witness to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not the Light but came to bear witness of the light. That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,"¹ which difference shows, that that reasonable soul which was in John could not be the one light, but shone by participation of another, the true Light. This John himself confessed in his testimony, where he said, "Of His fulness have all we received."

¹ John i. 6, 7.

CHAPTER III.

Of the true worship of God, wherein the Platonists failed in worshipping good or evil angels, though they knew the world's Creator.

THIS being thus, what Platonist or other philosopher soever had held so, and known God, and glorified Him as God, and been thankful, and not become vain in his conceits, nor have been an author of the people's error, nor winked at them for fear they would have confessed, that both the blessed immortals and we wretched mortals are bound to the adoration of one only God of gods, both their God and ours.

CHAPTER IV.

That sacrifice is due only to the true God.

To Him we owe that Greek *latría*, or service, both in ourselves and sacrifices, for we are all His temple, and each one His temples, He vouchsafing to inhabit us all in some and each in particular, being no more in all than in one: for He is neither multiplied nor diminished, our hearts elevated to Him are His altars: His only Son is the Priest by whom we please Him: we offer Him bloody sacrifices when we shed our blood for His truth: and incense when we burn in zeal to Him, the gifts He giveth us, we do in vows return Him: His benefits we consecrate unto Him in set solemnities, lest the body of time should bring them into ungrateful oblivion: we offer Him the sacrifices of humility and praises on the altar of our heart in the fire of fervent love: for by the sight of Him (as we may see Him), and to be joined with Him, are we purged from our guilty and filthy affects and consecrated in His name: He is our blessed founder, and our desires' accomplishment. Him we elect, or rather re-elect, for by our neglect we lost Him. Him, therefore, we re-elect (whence religion is derived), and to Him we do hasten with the wings of love to attain rest in him: being to be blessed by attainment of that final perfection, for our good (whose end the philosophers jangled about) is nothing but to adhere unto Him, and by His intellectual and incorporeal embrace, our soul grows great with all virtue and true perfection. This good are we taught to love with all our heart, with all our soul, and all our strength. To this good we ought to be led by those that love us, and to lead those we love. So are the two commandments fulfilled, wherein consist all the law and the prophets. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."¹ For to

¹ Matt. xxii.

teach a man how to love himself, was this end appointed, whereunto refer all his works for beatitude, for he that loves himself desires but to be blessed. And the end of this is, coherence with God. So then the command of loving his neighbour, being given to him that knows how to love himself, what does it but command and commend the love of God unto him? Thus God's true worship, true piety, true religion, and due service to God only, wherefore what immortal power soever (virtuous or otherwise) that loves us as itself, it desires we should but be His servants for beatitude, of whence it has beatitude by serving Him. If it worship not God, it is wretched, as wanting God: if it do, then will not it be worshipped for God. It rather holds, and loves to hold, as the Holy Scripture writes, "He that sacrifices to any gods but the one God, shall be rooted out," for to be silent in other points of religion there is none dare say a sacrifice is due but unto God alone. But much is taken from divine worship and thrust into human honours, either by excessive humility or pestilent flattery: yet still with a reserved notice that they are men, held worthy indeed of reverence and honour, or at most of adoration. But whoever sacrificed but to him whom he knew, or thought, or feigned to be a God: and how ancient a part of God's worship a sacrifice is, Cain and Abel do show full proof, God Almighty rejecting the elder brother's sacrifice, and accepting the younger's.

CHAPTER V.

Of the sacrifices which God requires not, and what He requires in their signification.

BUT who is so fond to think that God needs anything that is offered in sacrifice? The Scripture condemns them that think so diversely, one place of the Psalmist (to make short) for all: "I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God, because Thou needest none of my goods."¹ Believe it therefore, God had no need of man's cattle, nor any earthly good of his, no not his justice: but all the worship that he gives God, is for his own profit, not God's. One cannot say he does the fountain good by drinking of it, or the light, by seeing by it. Nor had the patriarch's ancient sacrifices (which now God's people read of, but use not) any other intent, but to signify what should be done of us in adherence to God, and charity to our neighbour for the same end. So then an external offering, is a visible sacrament of an invisible sacrifice, that is, a holy sign. And thereupon the penitent man in the prophet (or rather the penitent prophet), desiring God to pardon his sins: "Thou desirest no sacrifice though I would give it," says he: "but Thou delightest not in

¹ Ps. xv. 2.

burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit : a broken and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.”¹ Behold here he says, God will have sacrifices, and God will have no sacrifices. He will have no slaughtered beast, but He will have a contrite heart. So in that which He denied, was implied that which He desired. The prophet then saying He will not have such, why do fools think He will, as delighting in them? If He would not have had such sacrifices as He desired (whereof a contrite heart is one), to have been signified in those other (wherein they thought He delighted), He would not have given any command concerning them in Leviticus : but there are set times appointed for their changes, lest men should think He took pleasure in them, or accepted them of us otherwise, than as signs of the other : therefore, says another Psalm, “If I be hungry I will not tell thee, for all the world is mine, and all that therein is : will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?”² as who should say, If I would I would not beg them of thee, having them in my power. But then adds He their signification, “Offer praise to God, and pay thy vows to the Most High : and call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.”³ And in another prophet : “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings, and with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for the transgression, even the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has showed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requires of thee : surely to do justice and to love mercy, and to humble thyself, and to walk with thy God.”⁴

In these words are both the sacrifices plainly distinct, and it is shown that God respects not the first, that signifies those He respects as the Epistle entituled to the Hebrews says : “To do good and to distribute forget not : for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”⁵ And as it is elsewhere : “I will have mercy and not sacrifice :” this shows that the external sacrifice is but a type of the better, and that which men call a sacrifice is the sign of the true one. And mercy is a true sacrifice, whereupon it is said, as before : “With such sacrifices God is pleased.” Wherefore all the precepts concerning sacrifices, in the tabernacle and the temple, have all reference to the love of God and our neighbour. For in these two, as is said, is contained all the law and the prophets.

¹ Ps. li. 16, 17. ² Ps. l. 12, 13. ³ Ps. l. 14, 15. ⁴ Mic. vi. 6, 7, 8.
⁵ Heb. xiii. 16.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the true, and perfect sacrifice.

EVERY work therefore tending to effect our beatitude by a sinful inherence with God, is a true sacrifice. Compassion shown upon a man, and not for God's sake, is no sacrifice. For a sacrifice (though offered by a man) is a divine thing, and so the ancient Latinists term it : whereupon a man, consecrated wholly to God's name, to live to Him, and die to the world, is a sacrifice. For this is mercy shown upon himself. And so is it written, "Pity thine own soul, and please God."¹ And when we chastise our bodily abstinence, if we do it as we should, not making our members instruments of iniquity, but of God's justice, it is a sacrifice, whereunto the Apostle exhorts us, saying : "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you give up your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable serving of God."² If therefore the body being but servant and instrument unto the soul, being rightly used in God's service, be a sacrifice, how much more is the soul one, when it relies upon God, and being inflamed with His love loses all form of temporal concupiscence, as is framed according to His most excellent figure, pleasing Him by participating of His beauty ? This the Apostle adjoins in these words : "And fashion not yourselves like this world, but be ye changed in newness of heart, that ye may prove what is the good will of God, and what is good, acceptable, and perfect."³ Wherefore seeing the works of mercy being referred unto God (be they done to ourselves or our neighbours) are true sacrifices : and that their end is nothing but to free us from misery and make us happy, by that God (and none other) of whom it is said : "It is good for me to adhere unto the Lord :"⁴ truly it follows that all the whole and holy society of the redeemed and sanctified city, be offered unto God by that great Priest who gave up His life for us to become members of so great a head in so mean a form : this form He offered, and herein was He offered, in this is He our priest or mediator and our sacrifice, all in this. Now therefore the Apostle, having exhorted us to give up our bodies a living sacrifice, pure and acceptable to God, namely our reasonable serving of God, and not to fashion ourselves like this world, but be changed in newness of heart, that we might prove what is the will of God, and what is good, acceptable and perfect, all which sacrifice we are : "For I say," quoth he, "through the grace that is given to me, to every one among you, that no man presume to understand more than is meet to understand : but that he understand according to sobriety, as God hath dealt to every man the measure of

¹ Eccl. xxx. 23.² Rom. xii. 1.³ Rom. xii. 2.⁴ Ps. lxxiii. 28.

faith : for as we have many members in one body, and all members have not one office. So we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one, one another's members, having divers gifts according to the grace that is given us," &c. This is the Christian's sacrifice : we are one body with Christ, as the Church celebrates in the sacrament of the altar, so well known to the faithful, wherein is shown that in that oblation, the Church is offered.

CHAPTER VII.

That the good angels do so love us, that they desire we should worship God only, and not them.

WORTHILY are those blessed immortals placed in those celestial habitations, rejoicing in the participation of their Creator, being firm, certain, and holy by His eternity, truth, and bounty : because they love us mortal wretches with a zealous pity, and desire to have us immortally blessed also, and will not have us sacrifice to them, but to Him to whom they know both us and themselves to be sacrifices. For we both are inhabitants of that in the Psalm : "Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou City of God :"¹ part whereof is pilgrim yet with us, and part assists us with them. From that eternal city where God's unchanging will is all their law : and from that supernal court (for there are we cared for) by the ministry of the holy angels was that Holy Scripture brought down unto us, that says, "He that sacrifices to any but God alone, shall be rooted out." This scripture, this precept is confirmed unto us by so many miracles, that it is plain enough, to whom the blessed immortals, so loving us, and wishing as themselves, would have us to offer sacrifice.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the miracles whereby God has confirmed His promises in the minds of the faithful by the ministry of His holy angels.

I SHOULD seem tedious in revolving the miracles of too abstruse antiquity : with what miraculous tokens God assured His promises to Abraham, "that in his seed should all the earth be blessed,"² made many thousand years ago ? Is it not miraculous for Abraham's barren wife to bear a son, she being of age both past child-birth and conception ?³ that in the same Abraham's sacrifices, the fire came down from heaven

¹ Ps. lxxxvii. 2.

² Gen. xvii. 18.

³ Gen. xxi.

between them as they lay divided ; that the angels foretold him their destruction of Sodom, whom he entertained in men's shapes, and from them had God's promise for a son ;¹ and by the same angels was certified of the miraculous delivery of his brother Lot, hard before the burning of Sodom ; whose wife being turned into a statue of salt for looking back,² is a great mystery, that none being in his way of freedom should cast his eyes behind him ? And what stupendous miracles did Moses effect in Egypt by God's power for the freedom of God's people ? Where Pharaoh's magicians (the kings of Egypt that held God's people in thrall) were suffered to work some wonder, to have the more admired foil : for they wrought by charms and enchantments (the delights of the devils) : but Moses had the power of the God of heaven and earth (to whom the good angels do serve), and therefore must needs be victor : and the magicians failing in the third plague, strangely and mystically did Moses effect the other seven following : and then the hard-hearted Egyptians and Pharaoh yielded God's people their passage. And by and by repenting, and pursuing them, the people of God passed through the waters (standing for them as ramparts) and the Egyptians lost all their lives in their depth, being then rejoined.³ Why should I rehearse the ordinary miracles that God showed them in the desert : the sweetening of the bitter waters by casting wood therein,⁴ the manna from heaven, that rotted when one gathered more than a set measure : yet gathering two measures the day before the Sabbath (on which they might gather none) it never putrified at all : how their desire to eat flesh was satisfied with fowls that fell in the tents sufficient (O miracle) for all the people, even till they loathe them ! how the holding up of Moses' hands in form of a cross, and his prayer, caused that not an Hebrew fell in the fight : and how the seditious, separating themselves from the society ordained by God, were by the earth swallowed up quick, to invisible pains, for a visible example.⁵ How the rock burst forth into streams, being struck with Moses' rod, and the serpents' deadly bitings being sent amongst them for a just plague, were cured by beholding a brazen serpent set up upon a pole, herein being both a present help for the hurt, and a type of the future destruction of death by death in the passion of Christ crucified ! The brazen serpent, being for this memory reserved, and afterwards by the seduced people adored as an idol, Ezechias, a religious king, to his great praise, brake in pieces.

¹ Gen., xviii.² Gen. xix.³ Ex. xiv.⁴ Ex. xv.⁵ Ex. xxiii.

CHAPTER IX.

Of unlawful arts concerning the devil's worship, whereof Porphyry approves some, and disallows others.

THESE, and multitudes more, were done to commend the worship of one God unto us, and to prohibit all other. And they were done by pure faith and confident piety, not by charms and conjuration tricks of damned curiosity, by magic, or (which is in name worse), by Goetia or (to call it more honourably) Theurgy, which whoso seeks to distinguish (which none can) they say that the damnable practices of all such as we call witches, belong to the goetie, marry the effects of theurgy they hold laudable. But indeed they are both damnable, and bound to the observations of false filthy devils, instead of angels. Porphyry indeed promises a certain purging of the soul to be done by theurgy, but he falters and is ashamed of his text: he denies utterly that one may have any recourse to God by this art: thus floats he between the surges of sacrilegious curiosity, and honest philosophy: for, now, he condemns it as doubtful, perilous, prohibited, and gives us warning of it: and by and by, giving way to the praisers of it, he says it is useful in purging the soul: not in the intellectual part, that apprehends the truth of intelligibilities abstracted from all bodily forms: but the spiritual, that apprehends all from corporal objects. This he says may be prepared by certain theurgic consecrations called "Teletæ," to receive a spirit or angel, by which it may see the gods. Yet confesses he that these theurgic teletæ profit not the intellectual part a jot, to see the one God and receive apprehensions of truth. Consequently, we see what sweet apparitions of the gods these teletæ can cause, when there can be no truth discerned in these visions. Finally he says the reasonable soul (or, as he likes better to say, the intellectual), may mount aloft, though the spiritual part have no theurgic preparation: and if the spiritual do attain such preparation, yet it is thereby made capable of eternity. For though he distinguish angels and demons, placing these in the air, and those in the sky, and give us counsel to get the amity of a demon whereby to mount from the earth after death, professing no other means for one to attain the society of the angels, yet does he (in manner, openly), profess that a demon's company is dangerous: saying that the soul being plagued for it after death, abhors to adore the demons that deceive it. Nor can he deny that this theurgy (which he makes as the league between the gods and angels), deals with those devilish powers, which either envy the soul's purgation, or else are servile to them that envy it: a Chaldean (says he), a good man, complained that all his endeavour to purge his soul was frustrate,

by reason a great artist envying him this goodness, adjured the powers (he was to deal with) by holy invocations, and bound them from granting him any of his requests. So he bound them (says he), and this other could not loose them. Here now is a plain proof that theurgy is an art effecting evil as well as good both with the gods and men: and that the gods are wrought upon by the same passions and perturbations that Apuleius lays upon the devils, and men, alike: who notwithstanding (following Plato in that), acquits the gods from all such matters by their height of place, being celestial.

CHAPTER X.

Of theurgy that falsely promises to mundify the mind by the invocation of devils.

BEHOLD now this other (and they say more learned) Platonist Porphyry, with his own theurgy makes all the gods subject to passion and perturbation. For they may by his doctrine, be so terrifying from purging souls by those that envy their purgation, that he that means evil may chain them for ever from benefiting him that desires this good, and that by this art theurgic: that the other can never free them from this fear and attain their helps, though he use the same art never so: who sees not that this is the devils' mere cozenage but he that is their mere slave, and quite barred from the grace of the Redeemer? If the good gods had any hand herein, surely the good desire of man that would purge his soul should vanquish him that would hinder it. Or if the gods were just and would not allow him it, for some guilt of his, yet it should be their own choice, not their being terrified by that envious party, nor (as he says) the fear of greater powers that should cause this denial. And it is strange that that good Chaldean that sought to be thus purged by theurgy could not find some higher god, that could either terrify the other worse, and so force them to further him, or take away their terror, and set them free from the other's bond to benefit him: and yet so should this good theurgic still have lacked the rites wherewith to purge these gods from fear first ere they came to purge his soul: for why should he call a greater god to terrify them, and not to purge them? Or is there a god that hears the malicious, and so frights the lesser gods from doing good, and none to hear the well-minded, and to set them at liberty to do good again? O goodly theurgy! O rare purgation of the mind! where impure envy does more than pure devotion! No, no, avoid these damnable trapfalls of the devil, fly to the healthful and firm truth: for whereas the workers of these sacrilegious expiations do behold (as he says) some admired shapes, of

angels, or gods, as if their spirits were purged : why if they do ; ask the apostle's reason : " For Satan transformeth himself into an angel of light."¹

These are his apparitions, seeking to chain men's poor deluded souls in fallacies, and lying ceremonies, wresting them from the true, and only purging and perfecting doctrine of God : and as it is said of Proteus, he turns himself to all shapes ; pursuing us as an enemy, fawning on us as a friend, and subverting us in both shapes.

CHAPTER XI.

Of Porphyry's Epistle to Anebuns of Egypt, and desiring of him instruction in the several kinds of demons.

TRULY Porphyry showed more wit in his epistles to Anebuns of Egypt, where between learning and instructing he both opens and subverts all these sacrileges. Therein he reproves all the demons, that because of their foolishness do draw (as he says) the humid vapours up unto them, and therefore are not in the sky but in the air, under the moon, and in the moon's body. Yet dares he not ascribe all the vanities to all the devils that stuck in his mind : for some of them he (as others do) calls good, whereas before he had called them all fools. And much is his wonder why the gods should love sacrifices, and be compelled to grant men's suits. And if the gods and demons be distinguished by corporal and uncorporal, why should the sun, moon, and other stars visible in heaven (whom he avouches to be bodies) be called gods? and if they be gods, how can some be good and some evil? Or, being bodies, how can they be joined with the gods that have no bodies? Furthermore, he makes doubts whether the soul of a diviner, or a worker of strange things, or an external spirit, cause the effect.

But he conjectured on the spirit's side the rather of the two, because that they may be bound, or loosed, by herbs and stones in this or that strange operation. And some, therefore, he says, do hold a kind of spirits, that properly hear us, of a subtle nature and a changeable form, counterfeiting both gods, demons, and dead souls, and those are agents in all good or bad effects. But they never further man in good action, as not knowing them, but they do entangle and hinder the progress of virtue by all means; they are rash and proud, lovers of fumigations, taken easy by flattery, and so forth of those spirits that come externally into the soul and delude man's senses, sleeping and waking : yet all this he does not affirm, but conjectures, or doubts, or says that others affirm, for it was hard for so great a philosopher to know all the devil's vileness fully, and to accuse it freely, which knowledge no Chris-

¹ 2 Cor. xi. 14.

tian idiot ever seeks, but fully detests. Perhaps he was afraid to offend Anebuns, to whom he wrote, as a great priest of such sacrifices, and the other admirers of those things as appurtenances of the divine honours. Yet makes he, as it were, an inquisitive proceeding in those things which, being well pondered, will prove attributes to none but malignant spirits. He asks why the best gods, being invoked, are commanded as the worst to fulfil men's pleasures: and why they will not hear one's prayers that is stained with venery, when as they have such incestuous contracts amongst themselves, as examples to others? Why they forbid their priests the use of living creatures lest they should be polluted by their smells, when as they are invoked and invited with continual suffumigations and smells of sacrifices? And the soothsayer is forbidden to touch the carcase, when as their religion lies wholly upon carcases. Why the charmer threatens not the gods, or demons, or dead men's souls, but the sun or the moon, or such celestial bodies, fetching the truth out by this so false a terror? They will threaten to knock down the sky, and such impossibilities, that the gods being, like foolish babes, afraid of this ridiculous terror, may do as they are charged. He says further that one Charemon, one of the sacred (or rather sacrilegious) priests, has written that that same Egyptian report of Isis, or her husband Osiris, is most powerful in compelling of the gods to do men's pleasures, when the invoker threatens to reveal them, or to cast abroad the members of Osiris, if he do not despatch it quickly. That these idle fond threats of man, yea unto the gods and heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, &c., should have that violent effect to force them to perform what men desire, Porphyry justly wonders at, nay rather under colour of one admiring and inquiring, he shows these to be the actions of those spirits whom he describes under shadow of relating others' opinions, to be such deceitful counterfeiters of the other gods, marry they are devils themselves without dissembling. As for the herbs, stones, creatures, sounds, words, characters, and constellations used in drawing the powers of those effects, all these he ascribes to the devils' delight in deluding and abusing the souls that serve and observe them.

So that Porphyry, either in a true doubt, describes such of those acts, as can have no reference to those powers by which we must aim at eternity, but convince themselves the false devils' peculiars: or else he desires by his humility in inquiring, not by his contentious opposing, to draw this Anebuns (that was a great priest in those ceremonies, and thought he knew much) unto a due speculation of these things, and to detect their detestable absurdity unto him. Finally in the end of his epistle he desires to be informed what doctrine of beatitude the Egyptians held. But yet he affirms that such as converse with the gods and trouble the deity about fetching again of thieves, buying of lands, marriages, bargains, or such like, seem all in a wrong way to wisdom.

And the gods they use herein, though they tell them true, yet teaching them nothing concerning beatitude, are neither gods nor good demons, but either the false ones, or all is but a figment of man. But because these arts effect many things beyond all human capacity, what remains but firmly to believe, and credibly to affirm that such wonders (in word or deeds) as have no reference to the confirmation of their worship of that one God (to whom to adhere, as the Platonists affirm, is the only beatitude) are only seducements of the deceitful fiends, to hinder man's progress to virtue, and solely to be avoided and discovered by true zeal and piety.

CHAPTER XII.

Of the miracles that God works by His angels' ministry.

BUT all miracles (done by angels or whatever divine power), confirming the true adoration of one God unto us (in whom only we are blessed), we believe truly are done by God's power working in these immortals that love us in true piety. Hear not those that deny that the invisible God works visible miracles: is not the world a miracle? Yet visible, and of His making. Nay, all the miracles done in this world are less than the world itself, the heaven and earth and all therein, yet God made them all, and after a manner that man cannot conceive nor comprehend. For though these visible miracles of nature, be now no more admired, yet ponder them wisely, and they are more admirable than the strangest: for man is a greater miracle than all that He can work. Wherefore God that made heaven and earth (both miracles) scorns not as yet to work miracles in heaven and earth, to draw men's souls that yet affect visibilities, unto the worship of His invisible essence. But where and when He will do this, His unchangeable will only can declare: at whose disposing all time past has been, and to come, is. He moves all things in time, but time adores not Him, nor moves He future effects otherwise than present. Nor hears our prayers otherwise than He foresees them ere we pray: for when His angels hear them, He hears in them, as in His true temples (not made with hands) and so does He hold all things effected temporally in His saints, by His eternal disposition.

CHAPTER XIII.

How the invisible God has often made Himself visible, not as He is really but as we could be able to comprehend His sight.

NOR hurts it His invisibility to have appeared visible oftentimes unto the fathers. For as the impression of a sound of a sentence in the intellect, is not the same that the sound was: so the shape wherein they

conceived God's invisible nature, was not the same that He is: yet was He seen in that shape, as the sentence was conceived in that sound, for they knew that no bodily form could contain God. He talked with Moses, yet Moses intreated Him, "If I have found favour in Thy sight, show me Thy face, that I may know Thee."¹ And seeing it behoved the law of God to be given from the mouths of angels with terror, not to a few of the wisest, but to a whole nation, great things were done in the mount before the said people, the law being given by one, and all the rest beholding the admirable and strange things that were done. For the Israelites had not that confidence in Moses that the Lacedemonians had in Lycurgus, to believe that he had his laws from Jove or Apollo. For when that law was given the people, that enjoins the worship of one God, in the view of the same people were strange proofs shown (as many as God's providence thought fit) to prove that that was the Creator whom they His creatures ought to serve in that law.

CHAPTER XIV. —

How but one God is to be worshipped for all things, temporal and eternal: all being in the power of His providence.

BUT the true religion of all mankind (referred to the people of God) as well as one, has had increase, and received more and more perfection, by the succession and continuance of time, drawing from temporalities to eternity, and from things isible to the intellectual: so that even then when the promise of visible rewards was given, the worship of one only God was taught, lest mankind should be drawn to any false worship for those temporal respects: for he is mad that denies that all that men or angels can do unto man, is in the hand of one almighty: Plotine the Platonist disputes of providence, proving it to be derived from the high ineffable and beauteous God, unto the meanest creature on earth, by the beauty of the flowers, and leaves: all which so transitory, momentary things, could not have their peculiar, severally-sorted beauties, but from that intellectual and immutable beauty forming them all. This our Saviour showed, saying: "Learn how the lilies of the field do grow: they labour not, neither spin, yet say I unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these: wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field which is to-day and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall not He do much more unto you; O you of little faith?"² Wherefore though the mind of man be weak, and clogged with earthly affects, and desires of those things that are so frail and contemptible in respect of the blessings celestial (though necessities for this present life) yet does it well to desire them at the hands of one only God, and not

¹ Exod. xxxiii. 13.

² Mat. vi. 29, 28-30.

to depart from His service to obtain them elsewhere, when they may soonest attain His love by neglect of such trifles, and with that love all necessities both for this life and the other.

CHAPTER XV.

Of the holy angels that minister to God's providence.

It pleased the divine providence therefore so to dispose of the times, that as He said, and we read in the Acts, the law should be given by the angels' mouths, concerning the worship of the true God, wherein God's person (not in His proper substance, which corruptible eyes can never see, but by certain suppositions of a creature for the Creator) would appear, and speak syllabically in a man's voice, unto us : even He that in His own nature speaks not corporally but spiritually, not sensibly but intelligibly, not temporally, but (as I may say) eternally, neither beginning speech, nor ending : whom His blessed and immortal messengers and ministers heard not with ears, but more sincerely, with intellects : and hearing His commands after an ineffable manner, they instantly and easily frame to be delivered us in a visible and sensible manner. This law was given (as I say) in a division of time, first having all earthly promises that were types of the goods eternal, which many celebrated in visible sacraments, but few understood. But there the true religious worship of one only God, is directly and plainly taught and testified, not by one of the people, but by Him that made heaven and earth, and every soul and spirit that is not Himself : for He makes them that are made, and have need of His help that made them, in all their existence.

CHAPTER XVI.

Whether in this question of beatitude we must trust those angels that refuse the divine worship, and ascribe it all to one God, or those that require it to themselves.

WHAT angels shall we trust then in this business of eternal bliss. Those that require mortal men to offer them sacrifice and honours, or those that say it is all due unto God the Creator, and will us most piously, to give Him above it all, as one, in the only speculation of whom we may attain this happiness. For the sight of God is a sight of that beauty, and worthy such love, that Plato did not doubt to call him that wanted this unhappy, had he never such store of goods besides. Seeing then that some angels resign all this religious worship to him, and some would have it themselves : the first refusing all part of it, and the second not daring to forbid him of part of it : let the Platonists, Theurgics (or

rather Periurgics, for so may all those arts be fitly termed), or any other philosophers, answer which we should follow. Nay, let all men answer that have any use of natural reason, say, whether we shall sacrifice to these gods or angels that exact it, or to Him only to whom they bid us, that forbid it both to themselves and the others. If neither of them did any miracles, but the one side demanded sacrifice, and the others said no, God must have all, then ought piety to discern between the pride of the one and the virtue of the other. Nay, I will say more, if these that do claim sacrifice should work upon men's hearts with wonders, and those that forbid it, and stand all for God, should not have power at all to work the like, yet their part should gain more by reason, than the others' by sense: but seeing that God, to confirm His truth, has by their ministry, that debase themselves for His honour, wrought more great, clear, and certain miracles than the others, lest they should draw weak hearts unto their false devotion by inveigling their senses with amazements: who is so grossly fond, as will not choose to follow the truth, seeing it confirmed with more miraculous proofs? for the recorded miracles of the Pagan gods (I speak not of such as time and nature's secret causes by God's providence, have produced beyond custom as monstrous births, sights in the air and earth, fearful, or hurtful also, all which the devils' subtlety persuaded the world, they both procured and cured) I mean of such as were their evident acts, as the removal of the gods (that Æneas brought from Troy) from place to place by themselves: Tarquin's cutting of a whetstone, the Epidaurian serpents accompanying Æsculapius in his transportation to Rome: the drawing on of the ship that brought Berecynthia's statue from Phrygia (being otherwise not to be moved by so huge strength of men and beasts) by one woman with her girdle, in testimony of her chastity; and the carrying of water from Tiber in a sieve by a vestal, thereby acquitting herself from an accusation of adultery. These, nor such as these, are comparable to those, done in presence of the people of God, either for rarity or greatness. How much less than the strange effects of those arts which the Pagans themselves did legally prohibit, namely, of magic and theurgy, many whereof are mere *deceptiones visus*, and flat falsehoods indeed, as the fetching down of the moon, till (says Lucan) she spume upon such herbs as they desire. Now though some in their art seem to come near others of the saints' wondrous deeds, yet whoso considereth their end discerneth the latter ones far to excel the first. For their gods, the more sacrifices they desire, the fewer they deserve. But ours do but prove unto us One, that needs no such, as He has showed both by His holy writ, and whole abolishment of these ceremonies afterwards. If therefore these angels require sacrifice, then are these their betters that require none, but refer all to God: for herein they show their true love to us, that they desire not our subjection to them, by

sacrifice, but unto Him in contemplation of whom is their felicity, and desire to see us joined to Him from whom they never are separate. But suppose the other angels that seek sacrifices for many, and not for one only, would not have them for themselves, but for the gods they are under; yet for all this are the other to be preferred before them, as being under but one God, to whom only they refer all religion, and to none other: and the other no way daring to forbid this God all worship, to whom the former ascribe all. But if they be neither good angels nor gods (as their proud falseness proves) but wicked devils, desiring to share divine honours with that one glorious God, what greater aid can we have against them than to serve that God, to whom those good angels serve, that charge us to sacrifice not to them, but unto Him, to whom ourselves ought to be a sacrifice.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the ark of the testament and the miracles wrought to confirm this law and promise.

THE law of God, given by the angels, commanding the worship of one God, and forbidding all other, was put up in an ark called the ark of the testament: whereby is meant that God (to whose honour all this was done) was not included in that place or any other, because He gave them certain answers from the place of the ark, and showed miracles also from thence: but that the testament of His will was there: the law (that was written upon tables of stone and put in the ark) being there: which being in their travel carried in a tabernacle, gave it also the name of the tabernacle of the testament, which the priests with due reverence did bear. And their sign was a pillar of a cloud in the day, which shone in the night like fire: and when it removed, the tents removed, and where it stayed, they rested.¹ Besides, the law had many more great testimonies given for it, besides what I have said, and besides those that approached out of the place where the ark stood: for when they and the ark were to pass Jordan, into the land of promise, "The waters cleft, and left them a dry way:"² besides having borne it seven times about the first city that was their foe, and (as the land was then) slave to paganism, "The walls fell flat down without ruin or battery."³ And when they had gotten the land of promise, and that the ark (for their sins) was taken from them, and placed by the victor idolater in their chief god's temple and locked fast in, coming again the next day, they found their idol thrown down and broken all to pieces: and being terrified by these prodigies (besides a more shameful scourge) they restored the ark to those they took it from. And how? They set it

¹ Exod. xiii.

² Joshua iv.

³ Joshua vi. ; 1 Kings v.

upon a carriage yoking kine in it (or heifers) whose calves they took from them, and so (in trial of the divine power) turned them loose to go whither they would: they without guide came straight to the Hebrews, never turning again for the bleating of their calves, but so brought home this great mystery to those that honoured it: these and such like are nothing to God, but much to the terror and instruction of man. For if the philosophers (chiefly the Platonists) that held the providence of God to extend to everything great and small, by the proof drawn from the several forms and beauties of herbs and flowers as well as living creatures, were held to be more wisely persuaded than the rest: how much more do these things testify the Deity coming to pass at the hour when this religion was taught, that commands the adoration of one God, the only loving and beloved God, blessing all, limiting these sacrifices in a certain time, and then changing them into better by a better priest: and testifying hereby that He desires not these, but their significations, not to have any honour from them neither, but that we by the fire of His love might be inflamed to adore Him, and adhere unto Him, which is all for our own good, and adds nothing to His.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Against such as deny to believe the Scriptures concerning those miracles shown to God's people.

WILL any one say there were no such miracles; all is lies? He that says so and takes away the authority of Scripture herein, may as well say that the gods respect not men. For they had no mean but miracles, to attain their worship, wherein their Pagan stories show how far they had power to prove themselves always rather wonderful than useful. But in this our work (whereof this is the tenth book) we deal not against atheists, not such as exclude the gods from dealing in man's affairs, but with such as prefer their gods before our God, the founder of this glorious city: knowing that He is the Creator invisible and immutable of this visible and changeable world, and the giver of beatitude, from none of His creatures, but from Himself entirely. For His true prophet says: "It is good for me to adhere unto the Lord."¹ The philosophers contend about the final good to which all the pains man takes has relation. But He said not, It is good for me to be wealthy, honourable or invested a king: or (as some of the philosophers shamed not to say) "It is good for me to have fulness of bodily pleasure:" or (as the better sort said) "It is good for me to have virtue of mind:" but he said: "It is good for me to adhere unto God." This had He

¹ Ps. lxxii.

taught him, unto whom only both the angels, and the testimony of the law, do teach all sacrifice to be due : so that the prophet became a sacrifice unto Him, being inflamed with His intellectual fire, and holding a fruition of His ineffable goodness in a holy desire to be united to Him. Now if these men of many gods in the discourse of their miracles, give credence to their histories and books of magic, or (to speak to please them) theurgical books, why should not the Scripture be believed in these other, who are as far beyond the rest as He is above the others, to whom only these our books teach all religious honour to be peculiar?

CHAPTER XIX.

The reason of that visible sacrifice that the true religion commands us to offer unto one God.

BUT as for those that think visible sacrifices pertain to others, and invisible to Him, as only invisible, as greater to the greater, and better to the better (viz. : the duties of a pure heart, and an holy will) verily these men conceive not that the other are symbols of these, as the sound of words are significations of things. Wherefore as in our praises and prayers to Him, we speak vocal words, but offer the contents of our hearts, even so we in our sacrifice, know that we must offer thus visibly to none but Him to whom our hearts must be an invisible sacrifice. For then the angels, and predominate powers do rejoice with us and further us with all their power and ability. But if we offer unto them, they are not willing to take it, and when they are personally sent down to men, they expressly forbid it. And this the Scriptures testify : some held that the angels were either to have adoration, or (that which we owe only to God) sacrifice : but they were forbidden, and taught that all was only God's and lawfully given Him.¹ And those angels the saints did follow, Paul and Barnabas being in Lycaonia,² the people (for a miraculous cure) held them gods, and would have sacrificed unto them, but they humbly and godlily denied it, and preached that God unto them in whom they believed. But the wicked spirits do affect it only because they know it to be God's only due. For (as Porphyry and others think) it is the divine honours, not the smells of the offerings that they delight in. For those smells they have plenty, and may procure themselves more if they list. So then these arrogant spirits affect not the smoke ascending from a body, but the honours given them from the soul, which they may deceive and domineer over, stopping man's way to God, and keeping him from becoming God's sacrifice, by offering unto other than God.

¹ Apoc. xix.

² Acts xiv.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the only and true sacrifice, which the mediator between God and man became.

WHEREFORE the true mediator, being in the form of a servant, made mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, taking sacrifices with His Father, as God, yet in the servile form chose rather to be one than to take any, lest some hereby should gather that one might sacrifice unto creatures. By this is He the Priest, offering, and offerer. The true sacrament whereof is the Church's daily sacrifice: which being the body of Him the Head, learns to offer itself by Him. The ancient sacrifices of the saints were all divers types of this also, this being figured in many and divers, as one thing is told in many words, that it might be commended without tediousness. And to this great and true sacrifice, all false ones gave place.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of the power given to the devils, to the greater glorifying of the saints that have suffered martyrdom, and conquered the airy spirits, not by appeasing them, but adhering to God.

THE devils had a certain temporary power allowed them, whereby to excite such as they possessed, against God's City, and both to accept sacrifices of the willing offerers, and to require them of the unwilling, yea even to extort them by violent plagues: nor was this at all prejudicial, but very commodious for the Church, that the number of martyrs might be fulfilled: whom the City of God holds so much the dearer, because they spent their blood for it against the power of impiety: these now (if the Church admitted the words' use) we might worthily call our heroes. For this name came from ἥρα, Juno, and therefore one of her sons (I know not which) was called Heros, the mystery being that Juno was Queen of the air, where the heroes (the well-deserving souls) dwell with the demons. But ours (if we might use the word) should be called so, for a contrary reason, namely, not for dwelling with the demons in the air, but for conquering those demons, those aerial powers, and in them, all that is called Juno: whom it was not for nothing, that the poets made so envious, and such an opposite to good men being deified for their virtue. But unhappily was Virgil overseen in making her first to say, Æneas conquers men, and then to bring in Helenus warning Æneas, as his ghostly father, in these words—

“Junoni cane vota libens, dominamque potentem,
Supplicibus supera donis”—

'Purchas'd great Juno's wrath with willing prayers
And conquer'd her with humble gifts'—

And therefore Porphyry (though not of himself) holds that a good god or genius never comes to a man till the bad be appeased : as if it were of more power than the other, seeing that the bad can hinder the good from working, and must be entreated to give them place, whereas the good can do no good unless the others list, and the others can do mischief maugre their beards. This is no tract of true religion : our martyrs do not conquer Juno, that is the airy powers, that malice their virtues on this fashion : our Heroes (if I may say so) conquer not Hera by humble gifts but by divine virtues. Surely Scipio deserved the name of African rather for conquering Africa, than for begging or buying his honour of his foes.

CHAPTER XXII.

From whence the saints have their power against the devils and their pure purgation of heart.

GODLY men do expel the aerial powers, opposing them from their possession by exorcisms, not by pacification : and break their temptations by prayer, not unto them but unto God, against them. For they conquer nor chain no man but by the fellowship of sin. So that His name that took on Him humanity, and lived without sin, confounds them utterly. He is the priest and sacrifice of the remission of sins : He the mediator between God and men, even the man Christ Jesus by whom we are purged of sin, and reconciled unto God : for nothing severs man from God but sin, which not our merits, but God's mercy wipes off us. It is His pardon, not our power, for all the power that is called ours is ours by His bounteous goodness ; for we should think too well of our flesh, unless we lived under a pardon all the while we are in the flesh. Therefore have we our grace by a mediator, that being polluted by the flesh, we might be purged by the like flesh. This grace of God wherein His great mercy is shown us, doth rule us by faith in this life, and after this life is ended, will transport us by that unchangeable truth unto most absolute perfection.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the Platonists' principle in their purgation of the soul.

PORPHYRY says that the Oracles said that neither the sun's nor moon's *teletæ* could purge us, and consequently the *teletæ* of no gods can. For if the sun's and moon's (the chief gods) cannot, whose is more powerful? But the Oracles answered (quoth he) that the beginnings may : lest one should think that upon the denial of this power to the sun and moon

some other god of the multitude might do it. But what beginnings he has as a Platonist, we know. For he speaks of God the Father, the Son, called in Greek the Father's intellect: but of the Spirit, not a word, at least not a plain one, though what he means by a mean between the two I cannot tell: for if he follow Plotine in his discourse of the three privy essences, and would have this third, the soul's nature, he should not have put it as the mean between the Father and the Son. For Plotine puts it after the Father's intellect, but Porphyry, in calling it the mean, interposes it between them. And this he says as well as he could, or would: but we call it neither the father's spirit alone, nor the son's, but both. The philosophers speak freely, never fearing to offend religious ears in those incomprehensible mysteries; but we must lay our words to a line, that we produce no impious error by our freedom of speech concerning these matters. Wherefore when we speak of God, we neither talk of two principles, nor three, as we may not say there were two gods or three, though when we speak of the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost, we say that each of these is God. Nor say we with the Sabellian heretics, that He that is the Father is the Son, and He that is the Holy Ghost is the Father and the Son, but the Father is the Son's Father, and the Son the Father's Son, and the Holy Spirit both the Father's and the Son's, but neither Father nor Son. True then it is that man is purged by none but the beginning, but this beginning is by them too variably taken.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the true only beginning that purges and renews man's whole nature.

BUT Porphyry, being slave to the malicious powers (of whom he was ashamed, yet durst not accuse them), would not conceive that Christ was the beginning, by whose incarnation we are purged, but contemned Him in that flesh which He assumed to be a sacrifice for our purgation, not apprehending the great sacrament, because of his devil-inspired pride, which Christ, the good mediator, by His own humility subverted, showing Himself to mortals in that mortal state which the false mediators wanted, and therefore insulted the more over men's wretched souls: falsely promising them succours from their immortality. But our good and true mediator made it apparent, that it was not the fleshly substance but sin, that is evil: the flesh and soul of man may be both assumed, kept, and put off without guilt, and be bettered at the resurrection. Nor is death, though it be the punishment of sin (yet paid by Christ for our sins), to be avoided by sin, but rather, if occasion serve, to be endured for justice. For Christ's dying, and that not for His own sin, was of force to procure the pardon of all other sins. That He was the begin-

ning, this Platonist did not understand, else would he have confessed His power in purgation. For neither the flesh nor the soul was the beginning, but the Word, all creating. Nor can the flesh purge us by itself, but by that Word that assumed it, when "the word became flesh and dwelt in us."¹ For He, speaking of the mystical eating of His flesh (and some that understood not being offended at it, and departing, saying: "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?"²) answered to those that stayed with Him: "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." Therefore the beginning, having assumed flesh and soul, mundifies both in the believer. And so when the Jews asked Him who He was, He answered them "that He was the beginning,"³ which our flesh and blood, being encumbered with sinful corruption, can never conceive, unless He, by what we were, and were not, do purify us. We were men, but just we were not. But in His incarnation our nature was, and that just, not sinful: this is the mediation that helps up those that are fallen, and down: this is the seed that the angels sowed, by dictating the law wherein the true worship of one God was taught, and this our mediator truly promised.

CHAPTER XXV.

That all the saints in the old law, and other ages before it, were justified only by the mystery and faith of Christ.

By the faith of this mystery might the ancient saints of God also be justified (together with godly life) not only before the law was given the Hebrews (for they wanted not God's instructions nor the angels'), but also in the very times of the law, though they seemed to have carnal promises in the types of spiritual things, it being therefore called the Old Testament. For there were prophets then that taught the promise as well as the angels, and one of them was he whose sacred opinion of man's good, I related before: "It is good for me to adhere unto God."⁴ In which Psalm the two testaments are distinguished. For first, he (seeing those earthly promises abound so to the ungodly) says his feet slipped, and that he was almost down, as if he had served God in vain, seeing that felicity that he hoped of God was bestowed upon the impious: and that he laboured sore to know the reason of this, and was much troubled until he entered into the sanctuary of God, and there beheld their ends whom he (in error) thought happy. But then as he says, he saw them cast down in their exaltation, and destroyed for their iniquity, and that all their pomp of temporal felicity was become as a dream, leaving a man when he is awake, frustrate of the feigned joys he dreamed of. And because they showed great, here upon earth, "Lord,"

¹ John i. 14.

² John vi. 60.

³ John viii. 25.

⁴ Ps. lxxiii. 28.

says he, "In Thy city Thou shalt make their image be held as nothing." But how good it was for him to seek those temporalities at none but God's hands he shows, saying: "I was as a beast before Thee, yet was I always with Thee as a beast not understanding." For I should have desired such goods as the wicked could not share with me: but seeing them abound with goods, I thought I had served Thee to no end, when as they that hated Thee enjoyed such felicity. "Yet was I always with Thee." I sought no other gods to beg these things upon. And then it follows. "Thou hast holden me by my right hand, Thou hast guided me by Thy will, and hast assumed me into glory." As if all that which he saw the wicked enjoy were belonging to the left hand, though seeing it, he had almost fallen. "What have I in heaven but Thee?" says he, "And what have I upon earth but Thee?" Then he doth check himself justly, for having so great a good in heaven (as afterwards he understood), and yet begging so transitory, frail, and earthen a thing of God here below: "Mine heart faileth, and my flesh, but God is the God of mine heart." A good failing, to leave the lower and elect the loftier. So that in another Psalm he says: "My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord."¹ And in another: "My heart fainteth for Thy saving health." But having said both heart and flesh faints: he rejoined not, "The God of mine heart and flesh, but the God of my heart:" for it is by the heart that the flesh is cleansed (as the Lord says), "Cleanse that which is within, and then that which is without shall be clean:" then he calls God his portion, not anything of God's, but himself. "God is the God of my heart, and my portion for ever." Because amongst men's manifold choices, he chose Him only. For behold says he, "they that withdraw themselves from them, shall perish: thou destroyest all them that go a-whoring from Thee, that is, that make themselves prostitute unto many gods:" and then follows that which is the cause I have spoken all this of the Psalm: "As for me, it is good for me to adhere unto God," not to withdraw myself, nor to go a-whoring. And then is our adherence to God perfect, when all is freed that should be freed. But as we are now, the hold is, "I put my trust in the Lord God, for hope that is seen, is no hope, how can a man hope for that which he seeth,"² says the apostle. But when we see not our hope, then we expect with patience: wherein let us do that which follows, each one according to his talent becoming an angel, a messenger of God, to declare His will, and praise His gracious glory. "That I may declare all Thy works," says he, "in the gates of the daughter of Sion:" this is that glorious city of God, knowing and honouring Him alone: this the angels declared, inviting us to inhabit it, and become their fellow-citizens in it. They like not that we should worship them as our elected gods, but with them Him

¹ Ps. lxxxiii.² Rom. viii. 24.

that is God to us both : nor to sacrifice to them : but with them, be a sacrifice to Him. Doubtless then (if malice give men leave to see the doubt cleared), all the blessed immortals that envy us not (and if they did, they were not blessed), but rather love us, to have us partners in their happiness, are far more favourable and beneficial to us, when we join with them in sacrificing ourselves to the adoration of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of Porphyry's wavering between confessing of the true God, and adoration of the devils.

METHINKS Porphyry (I know not how) is ashamed of his theurgical acquaintance. He had some knowledge of good, but he durst not defend the worship of one God, against the adoration of many. He said there were some angels, that came down and taught theurgic practisers things to come : and others that declared the will of the Father upon earth, and His altitude and immensity. Now whether would he have us subject to those angels that declare the will of the Father upon earth, or unto Him whose will they declare. It is plain, he bids us rather imitate them than invoke them : why then we need not fear to give no sacrifices to these blessed immortals, but refer it all freely unto God. For questionless that which they know to be due to that God only in whose participation they are blessed, they will never ascribe to themselves either by figures or significations. This is arrogance proper to the proud and miserable devils, from which the zeal of God's subjects and such as are blessed by coherence with Him, ought to be far separate. To which blessed coherence it behoves the angels to favour our attainment, not arrogating our subjection to them, but declaring God the mean of both our coherences unto us. Why fearest thou now (philosopher) to censure these adverse powers, enemies both to the true God and true virtue ? Thou saidst but now that the true angels that reveal God's will, do differ from them that descend unto men that use theurgical conjurations. Why dost thou honour them so much as to say they teach divine things ? How can that be, teaching not the will of the Father ? Those now are they whom the malicious theurgic bound from purging the soul of the good one : whom he could not loose, for all that they desired to be let loose, and to do him some good. Doubtest thou yet that those are wicked devils ? Or dost but dissemble for fear of offending the theurgics, whose curiosity inveigled thee so, that they made thee believe they did thee a great pleasure in teaching thee this damnable cunning ? Darest thou extol that malicious plague (no power) that is a slave, and no regent over the envious, above the air, into heaven, and do the starry gods, or the stars themselves, such foul disgrace as to place it amongst them.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of Porphyry exceeding Apuleius in impiety.

How much more tolerable was the error of Apuleius, thy fellow-sectary, who confessed (spite of his teeth, for all his honouring of them) that the devils under the moon only were subject to perturbation ! quitting the gods ethereal, both visible as the sun, moon, &c., and invisible also from these affects, by all the arguments he could devise. Plato taught thee not this thine impiety, but thy Chaldee masters, to thrust up mortal vices amongst the ethereal powers, that the gods might instruct your theurgic in divinity : which notwithstanding thou in thine intellectual life makest thyself excel : putting art theurgic as not necessary for thee, but for others that will be no philosophers, yet thou teachest it, to repay thy masters, in seducing those to it that affect not philosophy, yet holding it of no use for a philosopher as thou thyself art : so that all that fancy not philosophation (which being hard to attain is affected by few) might by thine authority, inquire out theurgics, and of them attain (no intellectual but) a spiritual purification. And because the multitude of those do far exceed the philosophers, therefore more are drawn to thy unlawful magical masters, than to Plato's schools, for this the unclean devil (those counterfeit ethereal gods whose messenger thou art become) promised thee, that such as were purged by theurgy should never return to the Father, but inhabit above the air amongst the ethereal gods. But those whom Christ came to free from those devilish powers, endure not this doctrine. For in Him have they most merciful purification of body, soul, and spirit. For therefore put He on whole man without sin, to cleanse whole man from sin : I wish thou hadst known but Him, and laid the cure of thyself upon Him rather than upon thine own frail, weak virtue, or thy pernicious curiosity. For He which your own Oracles (as thou writest) acknowledged for holy and immortal, would never have deceived thee. Of whom also that famous poet says (poetically indeed) as under another person, but with a true reference to Him—

“Te duce si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras.”

‘Thy conduct all sin’s marks from men shall clear,
And quit the world of their eternal fear.’

speaking of those steps of sin (if not sins) which by reason of our infirmity may have residence in the great proficient of righteousness, and are cured by none but Christ, of whom the verse speaks. For Virgil spoke it not of himself, as he shows about the fourth verse of his “Eclogue,” where he says—

"Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas,"

'Time and Sybilla's verse are now new met,'

plainly showing he had it from Sybilla Cumæa. But those theurgics (or rather fiends in the shapes of gods) do rather putrefy than purify men's hearts by their false apparitions, and deceitful illusion in change of forms. For how should they cleanse another, being unclean themselves? Otherwise could they not be bound by the charms of the envious, either to fear to infect, or to envy to bestow the good they seemingly were about to do. But it suffices that thou confessest that neither the soul's intellectual part is made pure, nor the spiritual (that is under the other part) eternal, by art theurgic. But Christ promises this eternity, and therefore (to thy own great admiration, and deep grief) the world flocks to Him. What of that, that thou canst not deny that the theurgics do often err and draw others into the same blindness, and that it is a most plain error to become suppliant to those angelical powers? And then (as though thou hadst not lost thy labour in the former assertion) thou sendest such as live not intellectually to the theurgics to be purged in the mind's spiritual part.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

What persuasions blinded Porphyry from knowing Christ the true wisdom.

THUS drawest thou men into most certain error, and art not ashamed of it, being a professor of virtue and wisdom, which if thou truly respected, thou wouldst have known Christ the virtue, and wisdom, of God the Father, and not have left His saving humility for the pride of vain knowledge. Yet thou confessest that the virtue of continence only, without theurgy, and with those *teletæ* (thy fruitless studies) is sufficient to purge the soul spiritually. And once thou saidst that the *teletæ* elevate not the soul after death as they do now, nor benefit the spiritual part of the soul after this life: and this thou tossest, and tumblest, only, I think, to show thyself skilful in those matters, and to please curious ears, or to make others curious. But thou dost well to say this art is dangerous both for the laws against it, and for the performance of it. I would to God that wretched men would hear thee in this, and leave the gulf, or never come near it, for fear of being swallowed up therein. Ignorance (thou sayest) and many vices annexed thereunto, are not purged away by any *teletæ* but only by the Father's intellect, his *mens*, that knoweth His will. But that this is Christ thou believest not: contemning Him for assuming flesh of a woman, for being crucified like a felon, because thou thinkest it was fit that the

eternal wisdom should condemn those base things, and be embodied in a most elevated substance. Aye, but He fulfils that of the prophet, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and cast away the understanding of the prudent."¹ He does not destroy His wisdom in such as He has given it unto, but that which others ascribe to themselves, who have none of His, and therefore the apostle follows the prophetic testimony, thus, "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of the world? hath not God made the wisdom of this world foolishness?"² For seeing the world by wisdom knew not God in the wisdom of God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Seeing also that the Jews require a sign, and the Grecians seek after wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling-block unto the Jews, and foolishness unto the Grecians. "But unto them that are called both Jews and Grecians we preach Christ, the power, and wisdom of God: for the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." This now the wise and strong in their own conceit do account as foolish, and weak. But this is the grace that cures the weak, and such as boast not proudly of their false happiness, but humbly confess their true misery.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, which the impious Platonists shame to acknowledge.

THOU teachest the Father and His Son, calling Him His intellect, and their mean (by which we think thou meanest the Holy Spirit) calling them after your manner, three Gods. Wherein though your words be extravagant, yet you have a little glimpse of that we must all rely upon. But the incarnation of the unchangeable Son, that saves us all, and brings us all to that other which we believe and rely upon, that you shame to confess. You see your true country (though a long, long way off) and yet you will not see which way to get thither. Thou confessest that the grace to understand the deity is given to a very few. Thou sayest not, few like it, or few desire it; but, is given to a few: fully confessing the guilt of it to lie in God's bounty, and not in man's sufficiency. Now thou playest the true Platonist and speakest plainer, saying, "That no man in this life can come to perfection of wisdom:" yet that God's grace and providence doth fulfil all that the understanding lacks, in the life to come. Oh hadst thou known God's grace residing in Jesus Christ our Lord! Oh that thou couldest have discerned His assuming of body and soul to be the greatest example of grace that ever was! But what? in vain do I speak to the dead: but as for those

¹ 1 Cor. i. 19.

² Isa. xxxiii. 18.

that esteem thee for that wisdom or curiosity in arts, unlawful for thee to learn : perhaps this shall not be in vain. God's grace could never be more gracefully extolled, than when the eternal Son of God came to put on man, and made man the mean to derive His love to all men : whereby all men might come to Him, who was so far above all men, being compared to them, immortal to mortal, unchangeable to changeable, just to unjust, and blessed to wretched. And because He has given us a natural desire to be eternally blessed, He remaining blessed, and putting on our nature, to give us what we desired, taught us by suffering to condemn what we feared. But humility, humility a burden unacquainted with your stiff necks, must be the mean to bring you to credence of this truth. For what, can it seem incredible to you (that know such things, and ought to enjoin yourselves to believe it), can it seem incredible to you, that God should assume man's nature and body ? you give so much to the intellectual part of the soul (being but human) that you make it consubstantial with the Father's intellect, which you confess is His Son. How then is it incredible for that Son to assume one intellectual soul to save many of the rest by ? Now nature teaches us the coherence of the body and the soul to the making of a full man. Which if it were not ordinary were more incredible than the other. For we may the more easily believe that a spirit may cohere with a spirit (being both incorporeal, though the one human, and the other divine) than a corporal body with an incorporeal spirit. But are you offended at the strange child-birth of a virgin ? This ought not to procure offence, but rather pious admiration, that He was so wonderfully born. Or dislike you that He changed His body after death and resurrection into a better, and so carried it up into heaven, being made incorruptible, and immortal. This perhaps you will not believe, because Porphyry says so often in his work "*De regressu animæ*" (whence I have cited much), "that the soul must leave the body entirely, ere it can be joined with God." But that opinion of his ought to be retracted, seeing that both he and you do hold such incredible things of the world's soul animating the huge mass of the bodily universe. For Plato teaches you to call the world a creature, a blessed one, and you would have it an eternal one. Well then, how shall it be eternally happy, and yet never put off the body, if your former rule be true ? Besides, the sun, moon, and stars, you all say, are creatures, which all men both see, and say also. But your skill (you think) goes further : calls them blessed creatures, and eternal with their bodies. Why do you then forget or dissemble this, when you are invited to Christianity, which you otherwise teach and profess so openly ? why will you not leave your contradictory opinions (subverting themselves) for Christianity, but because Christ came humbly, and you are all pride ? Of what quality the saints' bodies shall be after resurrection may well be a question amongst our

greatest Christian doctors, but we all hold they shall be eternal, and such as Christ showed in His resurrection. But howsoever, seeing they are taught to be incorruptible, immortal, and no impediment to the soul's contemplation of God, and you yourselves say that they are celestial bodies immortally blessed with their souls; why should you think that we cannot be happy without leaving of our bodies (to pretend a reason for avoiding Christianity) but only as I said, because Christ was humble, and you are proud? Are you ashamed to be corrected in your faults? a true character of a proud man. You that were Plato's learned scholars, shame to become Christ's, who by His spirit taught a fisher wisdom to say, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and God was the word. The same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by it, and without it was made nothing that was made. In it was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." Which beginning of Saint John's Gospel a certain Platonist (as old holy Simplicianus, afterwards Bishop of Milan, told me) said was fit to be written in letters of gold, and set up to be read in the highest places of all churches. But those proud fellows scorn to have God their master, because the word became flesh, and dwelt in us. Such a thing of nothing it is for the wretched to be sick and weak, but they must exalt themselves in their sickest weakness, and shame to take the only medicine that must cure them: nor do they this to rise, but to take a more wretched fall.

CHAPTER XXX.

What opinions of Plato Porphyry confuted, and corrected.

IF it be unfit to correct aught after Plato, why does Porphyry correct such, and so many of his doctrines? Sure it is that Plato held a transmigration of men's souls into beasts: yet though Plato the learned held thus, Porphyry his scholar justly refuted him, holding that men's souls returned no more to the bodies they once left, but into other human bodies. He was ashamed to believe the other, lest the mother, living in a mule, should carry her son; but never shamed to believe the latter, though the mother living in some other maid might become her son's wife. But how far better were it to believe the sanctified and true angels, the holy inspired prophets; him that taught the coming of Christ, and the blessed apostles, that spread the gospel through the world? how far more honestly might we believe that the souls return but once into their own bodies: rather than so often into others? But as I said, Porphyry reclaimed this opinion much in subverting those bestial transmigrations, and restraining them only to human bodies. He says also that God gave the world a soul, that it, learning the bad-

ness of the corporal substance by inhabiting it, might return to the Father, and desire no more to be joined to such contagion. Wherein though he err something (for the soul is rather given to the body to do good by, nor should it learn any evil but that it does evil), yet herein he exceeds, corrects all the Platonists, in holding that the soul being once purified and placed with the Father shall never more suffer worldly inconvenience. Where he overthrows one great Platonism, viz., that the dead are continually made of the living and the living of the dead : proving that Platonical position of Virgil false, where he says that the souls being purified and sent unto the Elysian fields (under which fabulous name they figured the joys of the blessed) were brought to drink of the river Lethe, that is, to forget things past—

“Scilicet immemores supera ut convexa reuisent.
Rursus et incipiant in corpora velle reverti.”

‘The thought of heaven is quite out of the brain.
Now ’gin the wish to live on earth again.’

Porphyry justly disliked this, because it were foolish to believe that men, being in that life which the only assurance of eternity makes most happy, should desire to see the corruption of mortality, as if the end of purification were still to return to new pollution, for if their perfect purification require a forgetfulness of all evils, and that forgetfulness produce a desire in them to be embodied again, and consequently to be again corrupted, truly the height of happiness shall be the cause of the greatest unhappiness : the perfection of wisdom the cause of foolishness, and the fulness of purity, mother unto impurity. Nor can the soul ever be blessed, being still deceived in the blessedness : to be blessed it must be secure ; to be secure it must believe it shall be ever blessed, and that falsely, because it must sometimes be wretched : wherefore if this joy must needs rise of a false cause, how can it be truly joyful? This Porphyry saw well, and therefore held that the soul once fully purified returned immediately to the Father, lest it should be any more polluted with the contagion of earthly and corruptible affects.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Against the Platonists holding the soul co-eternal with God.

BUT altogether erroneous was that opinion of some Platonists importing the continual and necessary revolution of souls from this or that, and to it again : which, if it were true, what would it profit us to know it? unless the Platonists will prefer themselves before us, because we know not that they are to be made most wise in the next life, and blessed by their false belief? If it be absurd and foolish to affirm this, then is

Porphry to be preferred before all those transporters of souls from misery to bliss, and back again : which, if it be true, then here is a Platonist refuses Plato for the better : and sees that which he saw not, not refusing correction after so great a master, but preferring truth before man, and man's affection. Why, then, do we not believe divinity in things above our capacity, which teaches us that the soul is not co-eternal with God, but created by God? The Platonists refuse, upon this (seeming sufficient) reason, that that which has not been for ever cannot be for ever. Aye, but Plato says directly that both the world, and the gods, made by that great God in the world, had a beginning, but shall have no end, but by the will of the Creator endure for ever. But they have a meaning for this. They say this beginning concerned not time, but substitution : for even as the foot (say they), if it had stood eternally in the dust, the footstep should have been eternal also, yet no man but can say, some foot made this step ; nor should the one be before the other, though one were made by the other. So the world and the God therein have been ever co-eternal with the Creator's eternity, though by Him created. Well then, put the case, the soul be and has been eternal ; has the soul's misery been so also? Truly if there be something in the soul that had a temporal beginning, why might not the soul itself have a beginning also? And then the beatitude, being firmer by trial of evil, and to endure for ever, questionless had a beginning, though it shall never have an end. So then the position that nothing can be endless that had a temporal beginning is quite overthrown. For the blessedness of the soul has a beginning, but it shall never have an end. Let our weakness therefore yield unto the divine authority, and let us trust those holy immortals in matter of religion, who desire no worship to themselves, as knowing all is peculiar to their and our God : nor command us to sacrifice but unto Him to whom (as I said often, and must so still), they and we both are a sacrifice to be offered by that Priest that took our manhood, and in that, this priesthood upon Him, and sacrificed Himself even to the death for us.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of the universal way of the soul's freedom, which Porphyry sought amiss, and therefore found not : that only Christ has declared it.

THIS is the religion that contains the universal way of the soul's freedom : for nowhere else is it found but herein. This is the king's highway that leads to the eternal dangerless kingdom, to no temporal or transitory one. And whereas Porphyry says in the end of his first book, "*De regressu animæ*," that there is no one sect yet, either truly philosophical, Indian or Chaldæan, that teaches this universal way : and

that he has not had so much as any historical reading of it, yet he confesses that such an one there is, but what it is he knows not. (So insufficient was all that he had learnt, to direct him to the soul's true freedom and all that himself held, or others thought him to hold : for he observed the want of an authority fit for him to follow.) But whereas he says that no sect of the true philosophy ever had notice of the universal way of the soul's freedom, he shows plain that either his own philosophy was not true, or else that it wanted the knowledge of this way, and then, still, how could it be true? For what universal way of freeing the souls is there but that which frees all souls, and consequently without which none is freed? But whereas he adds Indian or Chaldæan, he gives a clear testimony, that neither of their doctrines contained this way of the soul's freedom : yet could not he conceal, but is still telling us that from the Chaldæans had he the divine oracles. What universal way then does he mean, that is neither received in philosophy nor into those Pagan disciplines that had such a stroke with him in matters of divinity (because indeed with them was the curious fond superstition, invocation of all angels) and which he never had so much as read of?

What is that universal way, not peculiar to every particular nation but common to all the world and given to it by the power of God? Yet this witty philosopher knew that some such way there was. For he believes not that God's providence would leave mankind without a mean of the soul's freedom. He says not, there is no such, but that so great and good a help is not yet known to us, nor unto him : no marvel : for Porphyry was yet all for the world, when that universal way of the soul's freedom, Christianity, was suffered to be opposed, by the devils and their servants' earthly powers, to make up the holy number of martyrs, that is, witnesses of the truth, who might show that all corporal tortures were to be endured for advancement of the truth of piety. This Porphyry saw, and thinking persecution would soon extinguish this way, therefore held not this the universal, not conceiving that that which he stuck at, and feared to endure in his choice, belonged to his greater commendation and confirmation. This therefore is that universal way of the soul's freedom, that is granted unto all nations out of God's mercy, the knowledge whereof comes, and is to come unto all men : we may not, nor any hereafter, say, why comes it, so soon, or, why so late, for His wisdom that does send it, is unsearchable unto man. Which he well perceived when he said, it was not yet received, or known unto him : he denied not the truth thereof, because he as yet had it not. This I say is the way that will free all believers, wherein Abraham trusting, received that divine promise, "In thy seed shall all the nations be blessed."¹ Abraham was a Chaldæan, but for to receive this promise, that the seed which was disposed by the angels in

¹ Genesis xxiii.

the mediator's power, to give this universal way of the soul's freedom unto all nations, he was commanded to leave his own land and kindred, and his father's house. And then was he first freed from the Chaldæan superstitions, and served the true God, to whose promise he firmly trusted. This is the way recorded in the prophet. "God be merciful unto us, and bless us : and show us the light of His countenance and be merciful unto us. That Thy way may be known upon earth : Thy saving health among all nations."¹ And long after: Abraham's seed being incarnate, Christ says of Himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."² This is the universal way, mentioned so long before by the prophets. "It shall be in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills ; and all nations shall fly unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His way, and we will walk therein. For the law shall go forth of Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."³ This way therefore is not peculiar to some one nation, but common to all. Nor did the law, and word of God, stay in Jerusalem, or Sion, but came from thence to overspread all the world. Thereupon the Mediator, being risen from death, said unto His amazed and amated disciples, "All things must be fulfilled which are written of Me in the law, the prophets, and the psalms." Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, saying, "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead the third day : and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name amongst all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."⁴ This then is the universal way of the soul's freedom, which the saints and prophets (being at first but a few, as God gave grace, and those all Hebrews, for that estate was in a manner consecrated), did both adumbrate in their temple, sacrifice, and priesthood, and foretold also in their prophecy, often mystically, and sometimes plainly. And the Mediator Himself and His apostles, revealing the grace of the New Testament, made plain all those significations, that success of precedent times had retained, as it pleased God, the miracles which I spoke of before evermore giving confirmation to them. For they had not only angelical visions, and saw the ministers of heaven, but even these simple men, relying wholly upon God's word, cast out devils, cured diseases, commanded wild beasts, waters, birds, trees, elements, and stars, raised the dead. Aye, except the miracles, peculiar to our Saviour, chiefly in His birth and resurrection, showing in the first the mystery of maternal virginity, and in the other the example of our renovation. This way cleanses every soul, and prepares a mortal man in every part of his for immortality. For lest that which Porphyry calls the intellect should have one

¹ Ps. lxxvii.² John xiv.³ Isaiah ii.⁴ Luke xxiv.

purgation, the spiritual another, and the body another, therefore did our true and powerful Saviour take all upon Him. Besides this way (which has never failed mankind, either in prophecies or in their performances), no man has ever had freedom, or ever has or ever shall have. And whereas Porphyry says he never had any historical notice of this way, what history can be more famous than this that looks from such a towering authority down upon all the world? or more faithful, since it so relates things past as it prophesies things to come: a great part whereof we see already performed, which gives us assured hope of the fulfilling of the rest. Porphyry, nor ever a Platonist in the world, can condemn the predictions of this way (albeit they concern but temporal affairs), as they do all other prophecies and divinations of what sort soever: for them, they say they neither are spoken by worthy men, nor to any worthy purpose: true, for they are either drawn from inferior causes, as physic can presage much concerning health upon such or such signs, or else the unclean spirits foretell the arts that they have already disposed of, confirming the minds of the guilty and wicked with deeds fitting their words, or words fitting their deeds, to get themselves a domination in man's infirmity. But the holy men of this universal way of ours never respect the prophesying of those things, holding them justly trifles: yet do they both know them and often foretell them to confirm the faith in things beyond sense and hard to present unto plainness. But they were other and greater matters which they (as God inspired them) did prophesy: namely, the incarnation of Christ, and all things thereto belonging, and fulfilled in His name, repentance and conversion of the will unto God, remission of sins, the grace of justice, faith, and increase of believers throughout all the world, destruction of idolatry, temptation for trial, mundifying of the proficients, freedom from evil, the day of judgment, resurrection, damnation of the wicked, and glorification of the city of God in an eternal kingdom. These are the prophecies of them of this way: many are fulfilled, and the rest assuredly are to come. That this strait way, leading to the knowledge and coherence of God, lies plain in the Holy Scriptures, upon whose truth it is grounded: they that believe not, and therefore know not, may oppose this, but can never overthrow it: and therefore in these ten books I have spoken, by the good assistance of God, sufficient in sound judgments (though some expected more) against the impious contradictors, that prefer their gods before the founder of the holy city whereof we are to dispute. The first five of the ten opposed them that adored their gods for temporal respects: the five latter, against those that adored them for the life to come. It remains now, according as we promised in the first book, to proceed in our discourse of the two cities that are confused together in this world and distinct in the other, of whose original progress and consummation I now enter to dispute, evermore invoking the assistance of the Almighty.



THE ELEVENTH BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

Of that part of the work wherein the demonstration of the beginnings and ends of the two cities, the heavenly and the earthly, are declared.

WE give the name of the city of God unto that society whereof that Scripture bears witness, which has got the most excellent authority and pre-eminence of all other works whatsoever, by the disposing of the divine providence, not the affectation of men's judgments. For there it is said: "Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God:"¹ and in another place, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, even upon His holy mountain, increasing the joy of all the earth."² And by and by in the same psalm: "As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God: God has established it for ever." And in another: "The rivers' streams shall make glad the city of God, the most high has sanctified His tabernacle, God is in the midst of it unmoved."³ These testimonies, and thousands more, teach us that there is a city of God, whereof His inspired love makes us desire to be members. The earthly citizens prefer their gods before this heavenly city's holy founder, knowing not that He is the God of gods, not of those false, wicked, and proud ones (which wanting His light so universal and unchangeable, and being thereby cast into an extreme needy power, each one follows his own state, as it were, and begs peculiar honours of his servants), but of the godly and holy ones, who select their own submission to Him, rather than the world's to them, and love rather to worship Him, their God, than to be worshipped for gods themselves. 'The foes of this holy city, our former ten books (by the help of our Lord and King), I hope have fully affronted. And now, knowing what is next expected of me, as my promise—viz., to dispute (as my poor talent stretches) of the original,

¹ Ps. lxxxvii. 2.

² Ps. xlviii. 1.

³ Ps. xlvii.

progress, and consummation of the two cities that in this world lie confusedly together : by the assistance of the same God, and King of ours, I set pen to paper, intending first to show the beginning of these two, arising from the difference between the angelical powers.

CHAPTER II.

Of the knowledge of God, which none can attain but through the mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

It is a great and admirable thing for one to transcend all creatures, corporal or incorporeal, frail and mutable, by speculation ; and to attain to the deity itself, and learn of that, that it made all things that are not of the divine essence. For so does God teach a man, speaking not by any corporal creature unto him, nor reverberating the air between the ear and the speaker, nor by any spiritual creature, or apparition, as in dreams, or otherwise. For so He does speak as unto bodily ears, and as by a body, and by breach of air and distance. For visions are very like bodies. But He speaks by the truth, if the ears of the mind be ready, and not the body. For He speaks unto the best part of the whole man, and that wherein God only does excel him ; and understand a man in the best fashion, you cannot then but say he is made after God's image, being nearer to God only by that part wherein he excels his others, which he has shared with him by beasts. But yet the mind itself, wherein reason and understanding are natural inwards, is weakened and darkened by the mist of inveterate error, and disabled to enjoy by inherence, nay, even to endure that immutable light, until it be gradually purified, cured, and made fit for such an happiness, therefore it must first be purged, and instructed by faith, to set it the surer ; wherein truth itself, God's Son, and God, taking on our manhood without wasting of godhead, ordained that faith, to be a pass for man to God, by His mean that was both God and man, for by His manhood is He mediator, and by man He is our way. For if the way lie between him that goes and the place to which he goes, there is hope to attain it. But if one have no way, nor know which way to go, what boots it to know whither to go ? And the only sure, plain, infallible high way is this mediator, God and man : God, our journey's end, and man, our way unto it.

CHAPTER III.

Of the authority of the canonical scriptures, made by the Spirit of God.

THIS God, having spoken what He held convenient, first by His prophets, then by Himself, and afterwards by His apostles, made that

scripture also, which we call canonical, of most eminent authority, on which we rely on things that befall our understanding, and yet cannot be attained by ourselves. For if things sensible either to our exterior or interior sense (we call them things present) may be known in our own judgments, we see them before our eyes, and have them as infallible objects of our sense: then truly in things that fall not in compass of sense, because our own judgments do fail us, we must seek out other authorities, to whom such things (we think) have been more apparent, and them we are to trust. Wherefore, as in things visible, having not seen them ourselves, we trust those that have: (and so in all other objects of the senses): even so in things mental, and intelligible, which procure a notice, or sense, in man (whereof comes the word sentence): that is, in things invisible to our exterior sense, we must needs trust them, who have learned them of that incorporeal light, or behold them continually before them.

CHAPTER IV.

That the state of the world is neither eternal, nor ordained by any new thought of gods, as if He meant that after, which He meant not before.

OF things visible, the world is the greatest: of invisible, God. But the first we see, the second we but believe. That God made the world, whom shall we believe with more safety than Himself? Where have we heard Him? never better than in the Holy Scriptures, where the prophet says, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." Was the prophet there when He made it? no. But God's wisdom, whereby He made it, was there, and that does infuse itself into holy souls, making prophets and saints, declaring His works unto them inwardly, without any noise. And the holy angels that eternally behold the face of the Father, they come down when they are appointed, and declare His will unto them, of whom he was one that wrote, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," and who was so fit a witness to believe God by, that by the same spirit that revealed this unto him, did he prophesy the coming of our faith. But what made God create heaven and earth, then, not sooner? they that say this to import an eternity of the world, being not by God created, are damnably, and impiously deceived and infected. For (to except all prophecy) the very order, disposition, beauty, and change of the world and all therein proclaims itself to have been made (and not possible to have been made but) by God, that ineffable, invisible Great One, ineffably and invisibly beauteous. But they that say God made the world, and yet allow it no temporal, but only a formal original, being made after a manner almost incomprehensible, they seem to say somewhat in God's defence from that chanceful rashness, to take a thing into His head that was not therein

before, viz., to make the world, and to be subject to change of will, He being wholly unchangeable and for ever. But I see not how their reason can stand in other respects, chiefly in that of the soul, which if they do co-eternize with God, they can never show how that misery befalls it anew, that was never accident to it before. If they say that the happiness and misery have been co-eternal ever, then must they be so still, and then follows this absurdity, that the soul being called happy, shall not be happy in this, that it foresees the misery to come. If it do neither foresee their bliss nor their bale, then is it happily a false understanding : and that were a most fond assertion. But if they hold that the misery and the bliss have succeeded each other from all eternity, but that afterwards the soul being once blessed, returns no more to misery, yet does not this save them from being convicted that the soul was never truly happy before ; but then begins to enjoy a new and uncertain happiness : and so they confess that this so strange and unexpected a thing befalls the soul then, that never befell it before : which new changes cause if they deny that God eternally foreknew, they deny Him also to be the author of that happiness (which were wicked to do). And then if they should say that He had newly resolved that the soul should not become eternally blessed, how far are they from quitting Him from that mutability which they disallow ? But if they acknowledge that it had a true temporal beginning, but shall never have temporal end, and having once tried misery, and gotten clear of it, shall never be miserable more, this they may boldly affirm with prejudice to God's immutability of will. And so they may believe that the world had a temporal original, and yet that God did not alter His eternal resolution in creating of it.

CHAPTER V.

That we ought not to seek to comprehend the infinite spaces of time or place, ere the world was made.

AND then let us see what we must say to those that make God the world's maker and yet examine the time : and what they will say to us, when we examine them of the place. They ask why it was made then, and no sooner, as we may ask, why was it made in this place and in no other ? for if they imagine infinite spaces of time before the world, herein they cannot think that God did nothing, so likewise may they suppose infinite spaces of place besides the world, wherein if they do not make the Deity to rest and not operate, they must fall to Epicurus' dream of innumerable worlds, only this difference there will be ; he makes all his worlds of the casual coagulation of atoms, and so by their parting dissolves them : but they must make all theirs God's handi-

works, if they will not let Him rest in all the interminable space beyond the world, and have none of all them worlds (no more than this of ours) to be subject to dissolution. For we now dispute with those that do as we do, make God the incorporeal Creator of all things that are not of His own essence. For those that stand for many gods, they are unworthy to be made disputants in this question of religion. The other philosophers have quite outstripped all the rest in fame and credit because (though they were far from the truth, yet) were they nearer than the rest. Perhaps they will neither make God's essence dilatable, nor limitable, but (as one should indeed hold) will affirm His incorporeal presence in all that spacious distance besides the world, employed only in this little place (in respect of His immensity) that the world is fixed in : I do not think they will talk so idly. If they set God on work in this one determinate (though greatly dilated) world : that reason that they gave why God should not work in all those infinite places beyond the world, let them give the same why God wrought not in all the infinite times before the world. But as it is not consequent that God followed chance rather than reason in placing of the world's frame where it now stands, and in no other place, though this place had no merit to deserve it before the infinite others : (yet no man's reason can comprehend why the divine will placed it so) : even so no more is it consequent that we should think that it was any chance made God create this world then, rather than at any other time, whereas all times before had their equal course, and none was more meritorious of the creation than another : but if they say, men are fond to think there is any place besides that wherein the world is : so are they (say we) to imagine any time for God to be idle in, since there was no time before the world's creation.

CHAPTER VI.

That the world and time had both one beginning, nor was the one before the other.

FOR if eternity and time be well considered, time never to be extant without motion, and eternity to admit no change, who would not see that time could not have being before some movable thing were created ; whose motion, and successive alteration (necessarily following one part another) the time might run by ? Seeing therefore that God, whose eternity alters not, created the world, and time, how can He be said to have created the world in time, unless you will say there was something created before the world, whose course time did follow ? And if the holy and most true scriptures say that " In the beginning God created heaven and earth," to wit, that there was nothing before then, because this was the beginning, which the other should have been if aught had

been made before, then verily the world was made with time, and not in time, for that which is made in time, is made both before some time, and after some. Before it is time past, after it is time to come : but no time passed before the world, because no creature was made by whose course it might pass. But it was made with the time if motion be time's condition, as that order of the first six or seven days went, wherein were counted morning and evening until the Lord fulfilled all the work upon the sixth day, and commended the seventh to us in the mystery of sanctification. Of what fashion those days were, it is either exceeding hard, or altogether impossible, to think, much more to speak.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the first six days that had morning, and evening, ere the sun was made.

As for ordinary days, we see they have neither morning nor evening but as the sun rises and sets. But the first three days of all had no sun, for that was made the fourth day. And first, God made the light, and severed it from the darkness, calling it day, and darkness, night : but what that light was, and how it ran a course to make morning and night, is out of our sense to judge, nor can we understand it, which nevertheless we must make no question but believe, for the light was either a bodily thing placed in the world's highest parts far from our eye, or there where the sun was afterwards made : or else the name of light signified that holy city, with the angels and spirits whereof the apostle says : "Jerusalem which is above is our eternal mother in heaven."¹ And in another place he says : "Ye are all the children of light, and the sons of the day : we are not sons of night and darkness." Yet has this day the morn and evening, because the knowledge of the creature, compared to the Creator's, is but a very twilight. And day breaks with man, when he draws near the love and praise of the Creator. Nor is the creature ever benighted, but when the love of the Creator forsakes him. The Scripture orderly reciting those days, never mentions the night : nor says, "night was," but, "the evening and the morning were the first day," so of the second, and so on. For the creature's knowledge, of itself, is as it were far more discoloured, than when it joins with the Creator's, as in the art that framed it. Therefore, *even* is more congruently spoken than *night*, yet when all is referred to the love and praise of the Creator, night becomes morning : and when it comes to the knowledge of itself it is one full day. When it comes to the firmament that separates the waters above and below, it is the second day. When unto the knowledge of the earth, and all things that have

¹ Gal. iv. 26.

root thereon, it is the third day. When unto the knowledge of the two lights the greater and the less, the fourth : when it knows all water-creatures, fowls, and fishes, it is the fifth ; and when it knows all earthly creatures, and man himself, it is the sixth day.

CHAPTER VIII.

What we must think of God's resting the seventh day after His six days' work.

BUT whereas God rested the seventh day from all His works, and sanctified it, this is not to be childishly understood, as if God had taken pains ; He but spake the word, and by that intelligible and eternal one (not vocal nor temporal) were all things created. But God's rest signifies theirs that rest in God, as the gladness of the house signifies those that are glad in the house, though something else (and not the house) be the cause thereof. How much more then if the beauty of the house make the inhabitants glad, so that we may not only call it glad, using the continent for the contained, as, the whole theatre applauded, when it was the men : the whole meadows bellowed, for the oxen ; but also using the efficient for the effect, as a merry epistle—that is, making the readers merry. Therefore the Scripture, affirming that God rested, means the rest of all things in God, whom He by Himself makes to rest : for this the prophet has promised to all such as he speaks unto, and for whom he wrote, that after their good works which God does in them or by them (if they first have apprehended Him in this life by faith) they shall in Him have rest eternal. This was prefigured in the sanctification of the Sabbath by God's command in the old law, whereof more at large in due season.

CHAPTER IX.

What is to be thought of the qualities of angels, according to Scripture.

NOW having resolved to relate this holy city's original, and first of the angels, who make a great part thereof so much the happier in that they never were pilgrims, let us see what testimonies of holy writ concern this point. The Scriptures, speaking of the world's creation, speak not plainly of the angels, when or in what order they were created, but that they were created, the word *heaven* includes. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," or rather in the world light, whereof I speak now, are there signified : that they were omitted, I cannot think, holy writ saying, that God rested in the seventh day from all His works, the same book beginning with, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth : " to show that nothing was made ere then. Beginning therefore with heaven and earth, and earth the first thing created, being as the

Scripture plainly says, without form and void, light being yet unmade, and darkness being upon the deep (that is, upon a certain confusion of earth and waters): for where light is not, darkness must needs be; then the creation proceeding, and all being accomplished in six days, how should the angels be omitted, as though they were none of God's works, from which He rested the seventh day? This, though it be not omitted, yet here is it not plain: but elsewhere it is most evident. The three children sang in their hymn, "Oh all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord," amongst which they reckon the angels. And the Psalmist says: "Oh praise God in the heavens, praise Him in the heights: praise Him all ye His angels, praise Him all His hosts; praise Him sun and moon, praise Him stars and light. Praise Him ye heaven of heavens, and the waters that be above the heavens, praise the name of the Lord, for He spake the word and they were made: He commanded and they were created:" here divinity calls the angels God's creatures most plainly: inserting them with the rest, and saying of all: "He spake the word and they were made:" who dares think that the angels were made after the six days: if any one be so fond, hearken, this place of Scripture confounds him utterly, "When the stars were made, all mine angels praised Me with a loud voice."¹ Therefore they were made before the stars, and the stars were made the fourth day. What? they were made the third day, may we say so? God forbid. That day's work is fully known, the earth was parted from the waters, and two elements took forms distinct, and earth produced all her plants. In the second day then? neither. Then was the firmament made between the waters above and below, and was called heaven, in which firmament the stars were created the fourth day. Wherefore if the angels belong unto God's six days' work, they are that light called day; to commend whose unity, it was called, *one day*, not the first day, nor differs the second or third from this, all are but this one, doubled unto six or seven, six of God's works, the seven of His rest. For when God said: "Let there be light, and there was light;" if we understand the angels' creation aright herein, they are made partakers of that eternal light, the unchangeable wisdom of God, all-creating, namely, the only begotten Son of God, with whose light they in their creation were illuminate, and made light, and called day in the participation of the unchangeable light and day, that word of God by which they and all things else were created. For the true light that lighteneth every man that cometh into this world, this also lighteneth every pure angel, making it light, not in itself, but in God, from whom if an angel fall, it becomes impure, as all the unclean spirits are, being no more a light in God, but a darkness in itself, deprived of all participation of the eternal light: for evil has no nature; but the loss of good, *that* is evil.

¹ Job xxxviii. 7.

CHAPTER X.

Of the uncompounded, unchangeable Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God in substance and quality, ever one and the same.

Good therefore (which is God) is only simple, and consequently unchangeable. This good created all things, but not simple, therefore changeable. I say created, that is made, not begot. For that which the simple good begot, is as simple as it is, and is the same that begot it. These two we call Father and Son, both which with their Spirit, are one God : that Spirit, being the Father's and the Son's, is properly called in Scriptures, "the Holy Spirit," it is neither Father nor Son, but personally distinct from both, but it is not really : for it is a simple and unchangeable good with them, and co-eternal. And this trinity is one God : not simple because a trinity (for we call not the nature of that good, simple, because the Father is alone therein, or the Son, or Holy Ghost alone, for that name of the Trinity is not alone with personal subsistence, as the Sabellians held), but it is called simple, because it is *one* in essence and the same *one* in quality (excepting their personal relation : for therein the Father has a Son, yet is no Son, and the Son a Father, yet is no Father). But in consideration each of itself, the quality and essence is both one therein, as each lives, that is, has life, and is life itself. This is the reason of the nature's simplicity, wherein nothing adheres that can be lost, nor is the containant one and the thing contained another—as vessels and liquors, bodies and colours, air and heat—or the soul and wisdom are : for those are not co-essential with their qualities : the vessel is not the liquor, nor the body the colour, nor air heat, nor the soul wisdom : therefore may they all lose these adjuncts, and assume others : the vessel may be empty, the body discoloured, the air cold, the soul foolish. But the body being one incorruptible (as the saints shall have in the resurrection), that incorruption it shall never lose, yet is not that incorruption one essence with the bodily substance. For it is alike in all parts of the body, all are incorruptible. But the body is greater in whole than in part, and the parts are some larger, some lesser, yet neither enlarging nor lessening the incorruptibility. So then the body being not entire in itself, and incorruptibility being entire in itself, do differ : for all parts of the body have inequality in themselves, but none in incorruptibility. The finger is less than the hand, but neither more nor less corruptible than the hand : being unequal to themselves, their incorruptibility is equal. And therefore though incorruptibility be the body's inseparable inherent, yet the substance making the body, and the quality making it incorruptible, are absolutely several. And so it is in the disjunct aforesaid of the soul, though the

soul be always wise (as it shall be when it is delivered from misery to eternity), though it be from thence evermore wise, yet it is by participation of the divine wisdom, of whose substance the soul is not. For though the air be ever light, it follows not that the light and the air should be all one. (I say not this as though the air were a soul, as some that could not conceive an incorporeal nature did imagine. But there is a great similitude in this disparity: so that one may fitly say, as the corporeal air is lightened by the corporeal light, so is the incorporeal soul by God's wisdom's incorporeal light, and as the air being deprived of that light, becomes dark, corporeal darkness being nothing but air deprived of light, so does the soul grow darkened, by want of the light of wisdom.) According to this then, they are called simple things, that are truly and principally divine, because their essence and their quality are indistinct, nor do they partake of any deity, substance, wisdom, or beatitude, but are all entirely themselves. The Scripture indeed calls the Holy Ghost the manifold spirit of wisdom, because the powers of it are many: but all one with the essence, and all included in one, for the wisdom thereof is not manifold, but one, and therein are infinite and immeasurable treasures of things intelligible, wherein are all the immutable and inscrutable causes of all things, both visible and mutable, which are thereby created: for God did nothing unwittingly, it were disgrace to say so of any human artificer. But if He made all knowing, then made He but what He knew. This now produces a wonder, but yet a truth in our minds: that the world could not be known unto us, but that it is now extant: but it could not have been at all but that God knew it.

CHAPTER XI.

Whether the spirits that fell did ever partake with the angels, in their bliss at their beginning.

WHICH being so, the angels were never darkness at all, but as soon as ever they were made they were made light: yet not created only to live, and be as they listed, but live happily and wisely in their illumination, from which some of them turning away, were so far from attaining that excellence of blessed wisdom which is eternal, with full security of the eternity, that they fell to a life, of bare foolish reason only, which they cannot leave although they would: how they were partakers of that wisdom, before their fall, who can define? How can we say they were equally partakers with those that are really blessed by the assurance of their eternity, whom if they had been therein equal, they had still continued in the same eternity, by the same assurance? For life indeed must have an end, last it never so long, but this cannot be said of eternity, for it is life, because of living; but it is eternity of never end-

ing : wherefore though all eternity, be not blessed (for hell fire is eternal), yet if the true beatitude be not without eternity, their beatitude was no such, as having end, and therefore being not eternal, whether they knew it, or knew it not : fear keeping their knowledge, and error their ignorance from being blessed. But if their ignorance built not firmly upon uncertainty, but on either side, wavering between the end, or the eternity of their beatitude : this protraction proves them not partakers of the blessed angels' happiness. We tie not this word, beatitude, unto such strictness, as to hold it God's only peculiar : yet is He so blessed as none can be more : in comparison of which (be the angels as blessed of themselves as they can), what is all the beatitude of anything, or what can it be ?

CHAPTER XII.

The happiness of the just that as yet have not the reward of the divine promise, compared with the first man of Paradise, before sin's original.

NEITHER do we only call them blessed, respecting all reasonable intellectual creatures, for who dares deny that the first man in Paradise was blessed before his sin ? though he knew not whether he should be so still or not. He had been so eternally, had he not sinned : for we call them happy whom we see live well in this life, in hope of the immortality to come, without terror of conscience, and with true attainment of pardon for the crimes of our natural imperfection. These, though they be assured of reward for their perseverance, yet they are not sure to persevere. For what man knows that he shall continue to the end in action and increase of justice, unless he have it by revelation from Him, that by His secret providence instructs few (yet fails none), herein ? But as for present delight, our first father in Paradise was more blessed than any just man of the world : but as for his hope, every man in the miseries of his body, is more blessed : as one to whom truth (not opinion) has said that he shall be rid of all molestation, and partake with the angels in that great God, whereas the man that lived in Paradise, in all that felicity, was uncertain of his fall or continuance therein.

CHAPTER XIII.

Whether the angels were created in such a state of happiness, that neither those that fell, knew they should fall, nor those that persevered, foreknew they should persevere.

WHEREFORE now it is plain, that beatitude requires both conjoined : such beatitude I mean, as the intellectual nature does fitly desire : that

is, to enjoy God, the unchangeable good, without any molestation, to remain in Him for ever without delay of doubt, or deceit of error. This we faithfully believe the holy angels have: but consequently that the angels that offended, and thereby lost that light, had not, before their fall: some beatitude they had, but not foreknowing: this we may think, if they were created any while before they sinned. But if it seem hard to believe some angels to be created without foreknowledge of their perseverance or fall, and other some to have true prescience of their beatitude, but rather that all had knowledge alike in their creation, and continued so, until these that now are evil, left that light of goodness, then verily it is harder to think that the holy angels now are in themselves uncertain of that beatitude, whereof the Scriptures afford them so much certainty, and us also that read them. What Catholic Christian but knows that no angel that now is, shall ever become a devil: nor any devil an angel, from henceforth? The truth of the Gospel tells the faithful, that they shall be like the angels, and that they shall go to life eternal. But if we be sure never to fall from bliss, and they be not sure, we are above them, not like them: but the truth affirming (and never erring), that we shall be their like, and equals, then are they sure of their blessed eternity: whereof those other being uncertain (for it had been eternal had they been certain of it), it remains that they were not the others' equals, or if they were, these that stood firm, had not this certainty of knowledge, until afterwards. Unless we will say that which Christ says of the devil: "He hath been a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth,"¹ is not only to be understood from the beginning of mankind, that is, since man was made, whom he might kill by deceiving; but even from the beginning of his own creation: and therefore because of his aversion from his Creator, and proud opposition (herein both erring and seducing), was debarred even from his creation, from happiness, because he could not delude the power of the Almighty. And he that would not in piety hold with the truth, in his pride counterfeits the truth, that the apostle John's saying, "The devil sinneth from the beginning,"² may be so understood also: that is, ever since his creation, he rejected righteousness: which none can have, but a will subject unto God. Whosoever holds thus, is not of the heretics' opinion, called the Manichees, nor any such damnations as they, that hold that the devil had a wicked nature given him in the beginning: they do so dote that they conceive not what Christ said, "He abode not in the truth," but think He said, "He was made enemy to the truth:" but Christ did intimate his fall from the truth, wherein if he had remained, he had participated it with the holy angels, and been eternally blessed with them.

¹ John viii. 44.² 1 John iii. 8.

CHAPTER XIV.

*How this is meant of the devil, "He abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him."*¹

BUT Christ set down the reason, as if we had asked why he stayed not in the truth? because, "there is no truth in him." Had he stood in it, truth had been in him. The phrase is improper: it says, "He abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him," whereas it should reverse it, and say, "there is no truth in him because he abode not therein." But the Psalmist uses it so also, "I have cried, because Thou hast heard me, O God:"² whereas properly it is: "Thou hast heard me, O God, because I have cried." But he, having said, "I have cried:" as if he had been asked the reason, adjoined the cause of his cry in the effect of God's hearing: as if he said, "I show that I cried, because Thou hast heard me, O God."

CHAPTER XV.

The meaning of this place, "The devil sinneth from the beginning."

AND that, that John says of the devil, "The devil sinneth from the beginning," if they make it natural to him, it can be no sin. But how then will they answer the prophets, as Isaiah, prefiguring the prince of Babylon, says: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning"?³ and Ezekiel: "Thou hast been in Eden in God's garden, every precious stone was in thy raiment"?⁴ This proves him once sinless: and so does that which follows more plainly: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created," &c. Which places, if they have none other fitter meaning, do prove that he was in the truth, but abode not therein: and that John's place, "He abode not in the truth," proves him once in the truth, but not persevering, and that also, "He sinneth from the beginning," means the beginning of sin, arising from his pride, but not from his creation. Now must not the place of Job, concerning the devil, "He is the beginning of God's works, to be deluded by the angels,"⁵ or that of the psalm, "this dragon whom Thou hast made to scorn him:"⁶ be taken as if God had made the devil at first, fit for the angels to deride, but that that was ordained for his punishment after his sin? "He is the beginning of God's works," for there is no nature in the smallest beast, which God made not; from Him is all form, subsistence and order: wherefore much more must the creature that is angelical, by the natural dignity, have the pre-eminence of all God's other works.

¹ John viii. 44.

⁴ Ezek. xxviii. 13.

² Ps. xvii. 16.

⁵ Job xl.

³ Isaiah xiv. 12.

⁶ Ps. civ.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of the different degrees of creatures, wherein profitable use and reasons order do differ.

FOR in all things that God made, and are not of His essence, the living is before the dead : the productive before these that want generation, and in their living, the sensitive before the senseless, as beasts, &c., before trees ; and in things sensitive, the reasonable before the unreasonable, as man before beasts ; and in things reasonable, immortals before mortals, as angels before men, but this is by nature's order. Now the esteem of these is peculiar and different, as the divers uses are : whereby some senseless things are preferred before some sensitive, so far, that if we had power, we would root the latter out of nature, or (whether we know or know not what place therein they have) put them all after our profit. For who had not rather have his pantry full of meat than mice, or possess pence than fleas. No marvel : for man's esteem (whose nature is so worthy) will give more, oftentimes, for a horse than for a servant, for a ring than a maid. So that in choice, the reason of him that respects the worth often controls him that respects his own need or pleasure, nature pondering everything simply in itself, and use everything respectively for another : the one valuing them by the light of the mind, the other by the pleasure, or use of the sense : and indeed a certain will and love, has gotten such predominance in reasonable natures, that although generally, all angels excel men in nature's order, yet by the law of righteousness, good men have gotten place of preferment before the evil angels.

CHAPTER XVII.

That the vice of malice is not natural, but against nature, following the will, not the creation in sin.

WHEREFORE in respect of the devil's nature, not his will, we do understand this place aright, " He was the beginning of God's works." ¹ For where the vice of malice came in, the nature was not corrupted before : vice is so contrary to nature that it cannot but hurt it, therefore were it no vice, for that nature that leaves God, to do so, but that is more natural to it to desire adherence with God. The evil will then is a great proof that the nature was good. But as God is the best creator of good natures, so is He the just disposer of evil wills : that when they use good natures evil, He may use the evil wills, well. Thereupon He caused that the devil's good nature, and evil will, should be cast down, and derided by His angels, that is, that His temptations might confirm

¹ Job xl.

His saints, whom the other sought to injure. And because God, in the creating of him, foresaw both his evil will, and what good God meant to effect thereby ; therefore the Psalmist says : " This dragon whom Thou hast made for a scorn : " that, in that very creation that it were good by God's goodness, yet had God foreknowledge how to make use of it in the bad state.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of the beauty of this universe, augmented by God's ordinance, out of contraries.

FOR God would never have foreknown vice in any work of His, angel or man, but that He knew in like manner what good use to put it unto, so making the world's course, like a fair poem, more gracious by antithetic figures. *Antitheta*, called in Latin, opposites, are the most decent figures of all elocution : some, more expressly call them contra-posites. But we have no use of this word, though for the figure, the Latin, and all the tongues of the world, use it. St Paul uses it rarely upon that place to the Corinthians where he says : " By the armour of righteousness on the right hand, and the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good, as deceivers, and yet true, as unknown and yet known, as dying and behold we live, as chastened, and yet not killed, as sorrowing and yet ever glad, as poor and yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing all things."¹ Thus as these contraries opposed do give the saying an excellent grace, so is the world's beauty composed of contrarieties, not in figure but in nature. This is plain in Ecclesiasticus, in this verse : " Against evil is good, and against death is life, so is the godly against the sinner : so look for in all the works of the highest, two and two, one against one."²

CHAPTER XIX.

The meaning of that place, " God separated the light from darkness."

WHEREFORE though the hardness of the Scriptures be of good use in producing many truths to the light of knowledge, one taking it thus and another thus (yet so as that which is obscure in one place be explained by some other plainer, or by manifest proofs : whether it be that in their multitude of opinions, one light on the author's meaning, or that it be too obscure to be attained, and yet other truths, upon this occasion, be admitted) : yet verily I think it no absurdity in God's works to believe the creation of the angels, and the separation of the clean ones from the unclean, then, when the first light (*lux*) was made. Upon this ground : " And God separated the light from the darkness : and God called the

¹ Cor. i. 6-10.

² Eccl. xxxiii. 13.

light day, and the darkness he called night.”¹ For He only was able to discern them, who could foreknow their fall ere they fell, their deprivation of light, and their eternal bondage in darkness of pride. As for the days that we see, viz. : this our natural light and darkness, He made the two known lights, the sun and the moon, to separate them. “Let there be lights,” says He, “in the firmament of the heaven, to separate the day from the night.” And by and by : “then God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser to rule the night :” He made both them and the stars : and God set them in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth, and to rule in the day and night, and to separate the light from darkness ; but between that light which is the holy society of angels, shining in the lustre of intelligible truth and their opposite darkness, the wicked angels, perversely fallen from that light of justice, He only could make separation, who foreknows, and cannot but foreknow, all the future evils of their wills not their natures.

CHAPTER XX.

Of that place of Scripture spoken of after the separation of the light and darkness, “And God saw the light that it was good.”

NOR may we overslip that these words of God, “Let there be light, and there was light,” were immediately seconded by these : “And God saw the light that it was good :” not after He had separated the light and darkness, and named them day and night, lest He should have seemed to have shown His liking of the darkness as well as the light. For whereas the darkness, which the conspicuous lights of heaven divide from the light, is inculpable : therefore it was said after it was, and not before, “And God saw that it was good.” And God, says he, “Set them in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth, and to rule in the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness ; and God saw that it was good.” Both those He liked, for both were sinless ; but having said, “Let there be light, and there was so,” he adjoins immediately, “And God saw the light that it was good.” And then follows : “God separated the light from the darkness, and God called the light day, and the darkness night ;” but here he adds not, “And God saw that it was good :” lest he should seem to allow well of both, the one being (not naturally but) voluntary evil. Therefore the light only pleased the Creator : the angelical darknesses, though they were to be ordained, were not to be approved.

¹ Gen. i. 4, 5.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of God's eternal unchanging will and knowledge wherein He pleased to create all things in form as they were created.

WHAT means that saying that goes through all, "And God saw that it was good,"¹ but the approbation of the work made according to the workman's art, God's wisdom? God does not see it is good, being made, as if He saw it not so ere it was made: but in seeing that it is good being made, which could not have been made so but that He foresaw it, He teaches, but learns not, that it is good. Plato durst go further, and say, "That God had great joy in the beauty of the universe." He was not so fond to think the newness of the work increased God's joy; but he showed that that pleased Him, being effected, which had pleased His wisdom to foreknow should be so effected, not that God's knowledge varies, or apprehends diversely of things past, present, and future. He does not foresee things to come as we do, nor behold things present, nor remember things past as we do: but in a manner far different from our imagination. He sees them not by change in thought, but immutably, be they past or not past, to come or not to come, all these has He eternally present, nor thus in His eye and thus in His mind (He consists not of body and soul), nor thus now, and otherwise hereafter, or heretofore: His knowledge is not as ours is, admitting alteration by circumstance of time, but exempted from all change, and all variation of moments: for His intention runs not from thought to thought; all things He knows are in His unbodily presence. He has no temporal notions of the time, nor moved He the time by any temporal notions in Himself. Therefore He saw that which He had made was good, because He foresaw that He should make it good. Nor doubted His knowledge in seeing it made, or augmented it, as if it had been less ere He made it; He could not do His works in such absolute perfection, but out of His most perfect knowledge. Wherefore if one urges with, "Who made this light?" it suffices to answer, God: if we be asked by what means, suffices this, "God said, Let there be light, and there was light:" God making it by His very word. But because there are three necessary questions of every creature, who made it, how He made it, and wherefore He made it? God says, quoth Moses, "Let there be light, and there was light, and God saw the light that it was good." Who made it? God. How? God said but "Let it be, and it was:" wherefore? It was good. No better author can there be than God, no better art than His word, no better cause why, than that a good God should make a good creature. And this Plato praised as the justest cause of the world's creation: whether he had read it, or heard it, or got it by speculation of the creatures, or learned it of those that had this speculation.

¹ Gen. i.

CHAPTER XXII.

Concerning those that disliked some of the good Creator's creatures, and thought some things naturally evil.

YET this good cause of the creation, God's goodness : this just, fit cause, which being well considered, would give end to all further investigation in this kind, some heretics could not discern, because many things, by not agreeing with this poor frail mortal flesh (being now our just punishment) do offend, and hurt it, as fire, cold, wild beasts, &c. These do not observe in what place of nature they live, and are placed, nor how much they grace the universe (like a fair state) with their stations, nor what commodity redounds to us from them, if we can know how to use them : insomuch that poison (a thing one way pernicious) being conveniently ministered, procures health : and contrariwise, our meat, drink, nay, the very light, immoderately used, is hurtful. Hence does God's providence advise us not to dispraise anything rashly, but to seek out the use of it warily, and where our wit and weakness fails, there to believe the rest that is hidden, as we do in other things past our reach : for the obscurity of the use, either exercises the humility, or beats down the pride, nothing at all in nature being evil (evil being but a privation of good), but everything from earth to heaven ascending in a degree of goodness, and so from the visible unto the invisible, unto which all are unequal. And in the greatest is God the great workman, yet no lesser in the less : which little things are not to be measured to their own greatness, being near to nothing, but by their Maker's wisdom : as in a man's shape, shave his eyebrow, a very nothing to the body, yet how much does it deform him, his beauty consisting more of proportion and parity of parts, than magnitude. Nor is it a wonder that those that hold some nature bad, and produced from a bad beginning, do not receive God's goodness for the cause of the creation, but rather think that He was compelled by this rebellious evil of mere necessity to fall a-creating, and mixing of His own good nature with evil in the suppression and reforming thereof, by which it was so foiled, and so toiled, that He had much ado to recreate and mundify it : nor can yet cleanse it all, but that which He could cleanse, serves as the future prison of the captived enemy. This was not the Manichees' foolishness, but their madness : which they should abandon, would they like Christians believe that God's nature is unchangeable, incorruptible, impassible, and that the soul (which may be changed by the will, unto worse, and by the corruption of sin be deprived of that unchangeable light) is no part of God nor God's nature, but by Him created of a far inferior mould.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the error that Origen incurs.

BUT the great wonder is that some hold one beginning with us, of all things, and that God created all things that are not of His essence, otherwise they could never have had being : and yet will not hold that plain and good belief of the world's simple and good course of creation, that the good God made all things good. They hold that all that is not God, is after Him, and yet that all is not good which none but God could make. But the souls, they say (not parts, but creatures of God), sinned in falling from the Maker : and being cast according to their deserts, into divers degrees, down from heaven, got certain bodies, for their prisons. And thereupon the world was made (say they) not for increase of good, but restraint of bad, and this is the world. Herein is Origen justly culpable, for in his "*Periarchion*," or book of beginnings, he affirms this ; wherein I have much marvel, that a man so read in divine Scriptures, should not observe first how contrary this was to the testimony of Scripture, that confirms all God's works with this, "And God saw that it was good :" and as the conclusion, "God saw all that He had made, and lo, it was very good :" averring no cause for this creation, but only, that the good God should produce good things : where if no man had sinned, the world should have been adorned and filled only with good natures. But sin being committed, it did not follow that all should be filled with badness, the far greater part remaining still good, keeping the course of their nature in heaven : nor could the evil willers, in breaking the laws of nature, avoid the just laws of the all-disposing God. For as a picture shows well though it have black colours in divers places, so the universe is most fair, for all these stains of sins, which notwithstanding being weighed by themselves do disgrace the lustre of it. Besides, Origen should have seen (and all wise men with him) that if the world were made only for a penal prison for the transgressing powers to be embodied in, each one according to the guilt, the less offenders the higher and lighter, and the greater ones the baser and heavier : that then the devils (the worst prevaricators) should rather have been thrust into the basest, that is, earthly bodies, than the worst men. But that we might know that the spirits' merits are not repaid by the bodies' qualities : the worst devil has an airy body, and man (though he be bad) yet of far less malice and guilt, has an earthly body, yea and had ere his fall. And what can be more fond, than to think that the sun was rather made for a soul to be punished in as a prison, than by the providence of God, to be one, in one world as a light to the beauty, and a comfort to the creatures ? Otherwise, two, ten, or a hundred souls sinning all alike, the world should have

so many suns : to avoid which we must rather believe that there was but one soul sinned in that kind, deserving such a body rather than that the Maker's miraculous providence did so dispose of the sun, for the light and comfort of things created : it is not the souls whereof, speak they know not what, but it is their own souls that are so far from truth that they must needs be attained and restrained. Therefore these three I commended before, as fit questions of every creature, viz. : "Who made it, how, and why?" the answer to which is, "God by His word, because He is good : " whether the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost do imitate this unto us by their mystical body, or there be some place of Scripture that prohibits us to answer thus, is a great question, and not fit to be opened in one volume.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the divine Trinity, notifying itself (in some part) in all the works thereof.

WE believe, hold, and faithfully affirm, that God the Father begot the world, His wisdom by which all was made, His only Son, one with one, co-eternal, most good, and most equal : and that the Holy Spirit is both of the Father and the Son, consubstantial, and co-eternally with them both : and this is both a Trinity in respect of the persons, and but one God in the inseparable divinity and one omnipotence in the inseparable power, yet so, as every one of the three be held to be God omnipotent : and yet altogether are not three Gods omnipotents, but one God omnipotent : such is the inseparable unity of three persons, and so must it be taught of. But whether the Spirit, being the good Father's, and the good Son's, may be said to be both their goodnesses, here I dare not rashly determine : I durst rather call it the sanctity of them both : not as their quality, but their substance and the third person in Trinity. For to that, this probability leads me, that the Father is holy, and the Son holy, and yet the Spirit is properly called holy, as being the substantial, and consubstantial holiness of them both. But if the divine goodness be nothing else but holiness, then is it but diligent reason, and no bold presumption to think (for exercise of our intentions' sake) that in these three questions of each work of God, who made it, how, and why, the Holy Trinity is secretly intimated unto us : for it was the Father of the world that said, "Let it be made ;" and that which was made when He spake, doubtless was made by the word : and in that, where it is said, "And God saw that it was good," it is plain that neither necessity nor use, but only His mere will moved God to make what was made, that is, "Because it was good : " which was said after it was done, to show the correspondence of the good creature to

the Creator, by reason of whose goodness it was made. If this goodness be now the Holy Spirit, then is all the whole Trinity intimate to us in every creature : and hence is the original, form, and perfection of that holy city whereof the angels are inhabitants. Ask whence it is? God made it. How has it wisdom? God enlightened it. How is it happy? God whom it enjoys has framed the existence, and illustrated the contemplation, and sweetened the inherence thereof in Himself, that is, it sees, loves, rejoices in God's eternity, shines in His truth, and joys in His goodness.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of the tripartite division of all philosophical discipline.

HENCE was it (as far as we conceive) that philosophy got three parts : or rather that the philosophers observed the three parts. They did not invent them, but they observed the natural, rational, and moral, from hence. These are the Latin names, ordinarily used, as we showed in our eighth book ; not that it follows that herein they conceived a whit of the Trinity : though Plato were the first that is said to find out and record this division : and that unto him none but God seemed the author of all nature, or the giver of reason, or the inspirer of honesty. But whereas in these points of nature, inquisition of truth, and the final good, there are many diverse opinions, yet all their controversy lies in those three great and general questions : every one makes a discrepant opinion from another in all three, and yet all do hold that nature has some cause, knowledge some form, and life some direction and sum. For three things are sought out in every artist—nature, skill, and practice ; his nature to be judged of by wit, his skill by knowledge, and his practice by the use. I know well that fruit belongs to fruition properly, and use to the user (and that they seem to be differently used, fruition of a thing which being desired for itself only, delights us ; and use of that which we seek for another respect : in which sense we must rather use than enjoy temporalities, to deserve the fruition of eternity : not as the wicked enjoy money, and use God, spending not money for Him, but honouring Him for money), yet in common phrase of speech we both use fruition, and enjoy use. For fruits properly are the field's increase, whereupon we live : so then thus I take use in three observations of an artist—his nature, skill, and use. From which the philosophers invented the several disciplines, tending all to beatitude : the natural for nature, the rational for doctrine, the moral for use. So that if our nature were of itself, we should know our own wisdom, and never go about to know it by learning, *ab externo*, and if our love had original of itself, and returned upon itself, it would suffice us unto beatitude, exempting us from need of any other good. But seeing

our nature has being from God our author, doubtless we must both have Him to teach us true wisdom, and to inspire us with the means to be truly blessed, by His high sweetness.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of the image of the Trinity which is in some sort in every man's nature, even before his glorification.

AND we have in ourselves an image of that Holy Trinity which shall be perfected by reformation, and made very like it : though it be far unequal, and far distant from it, briefly neither co-eternal with God, nor of His substance, yet is it the nearest it of any creature, for we both have a being, know it, and love both our being and knowledge. And in these three no false appearance ever can deceive us. For we do not discern them as things visible, by sense as we see colours, hear sounds, scent smells, taste savours, and touch things hard and soft : the abstracts of which sensibles we conceive, remember, and desire in incorporeal forms most like to these other : in those three it is not so ; I know without all fantastical imagination that I am myself, that this I know and love. I fear not the academic arguments in these truths, that say, "What if you err?" if I err, I am. For he that has no being cannot err : therefore mine error proves my being : which being so, how can I err in holding my being? for though I be one that may err, yet doubtless in that I know my being, I err not : and consequently, if I know that, I know my being : and loving these two, I adjoin this love as a third of equal esteem with the two. For I do not err in that I love, knowing the two things I love, without error : if they were false, it were true that I loved false things. For how could I be justly checked for loving of false things if it were false that I loved them? But seeing the things loved are true, and sure, how can the love of them be but true and sure? And there is no man that desires not to be, as there is none desires not to be happy : for how can he have happiness, and have no being?

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of essence, knowledge of essence, and love of both.

So naturally does this delight, that very wretches, for nothing else but this, would rather leave their misery than the world, knowing themselves wretches though, yet would they not die. And the most wretched of all, either in wise judgments (for their foolishness) or in theirs that hold themselves blessed (for their defect hereof) : if one

should proffer them an immortality of misery, and tell them if they refused it, they should become just nothing, and lose all being, verily they would rejoice and choose an eternal misery before a nullity of being. This our common sense testifies. For why do they fear to end their misery by death rather than continue it, but that nature still wishes to hold a being? And therefore seeing they know they must die, they do make such great account of a long life in their misery, ere they die : wherein doubtless they show how thankful they will be for immortality, though it had not end of their misery. And what of brute beasts that understand not this, from the dragon to the worm? Do they not show their love of being, by avoiding death all ways possible? The trees and plants that have no sense of death nor means to avoid it, do they not put forth one sprig into the air, and another deeper into the earth, whereby to attract nutriment and preserve their being? Nay, the very bodies that have neither sense nor vegetation, by their very motion upwards, downwards, or middle suspension, move to the conservation of their essence and nature. Now then may be gathered how much man's nature is beloved, and loth to be deceived, from hence, that man had rather lament in a sound mind, than rejoice in folly. Which power is in no mortal creature but man : others have sharper sights than we, yet not any can behold the incorporeal light, which in some sort lights our minds, producing a true judgment of all these things, as far as we are capable of it. But though the unreasonable creatures' senses contain no knowledge, yet some similitude of knowledge there is in them. But all other corporal creatures, having no sense in themselves, are but the objects of others' senses, therefore called sensible : and the growth and power whereby the trees draw nutriment, this is like their sense. But these and all other corporal bodies' causes, are hid in nature, marry their forms in the diversity (the parts of the world's structure) are apparent to us, seemingly professing a desire to be known since they could not know themselves : but our bodily senses judge not of them though they apprehend them. That is left unto a far more excellent interior sense, discerning just and unjust : just, by the intelligible form, unjust, by the privation thereof. The office of this sense, neither the eye, the ear, the smell, the taste, nor the touch can perform. By this I know my being, and I know this knowledge, and I love them both, and know that I love them both.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Whether we draw nearer to the image of the Holy Trinity, in loving of that love by which we love to be, and to know our being.

BUT we have spoken as much as needs here of the essence and knowledge, how much we ought to respect them in ourselves, and in other

creatures under us, though we find a different similitude in them. But whether the love that we love them in be loved, that is to declare. It is loved : we prove it, because it is loved in all things that are justly loved. For he is not worthily called a good man, that knows good, but he that loves it. Why, then, may we not love that love in ourselves, whereby we love that which is to be loved. They may both be in one man ; and it is good for a man that, his goodness increasing, his evil should decrease, even to the perfection of his cure, and full change into goodness : for if we were beasts, we should love a carnal sensitive life : and this good would suffice our nature without any further trouble ; if we were trees, we should not indeed love any thing by motion of sense : yet should we seem to affect fruitfulness and growth : if we were stones, water, wind, fire, or so, we should want sense and life, yet should we have a natural appetite unto our due places, for the motions of weights are like the body's loves, go they upward or downwards : for weight is to the body, as love is to the soul. But because we are men, made after our Creator's image, whose eternity is true, truth eternal : charity, true and eternal ; neither confounded nor severed, we run through all things under us (which could not be created, formed, nor ordered without the hand of the most essential, wise, and good God), and so through all the works of the creation : gathering from this more plain, and from that less apparent marks of His essence : and beholding His image in ourselves like the prodigal child, we recall our thoughts home, and return to Him from whom we fell. There our being shall have no end, our knowledge no error, our love no offence. But as now, though we see these three sure, trusting not to others, but observing it ourselves, with our certain interior sight, yet because of ourselves we cannot know how long they shall last, when they shall end, whither they shall go, doing well or evil, therefore here we take other witnesses, of the infallibility of whose credit we will not dispute here, but hereafter. In this book of the city of God, that was never pilgrim, but always immortal in heaven, being compounded of the angels eternally coherent with God, and never ceasing this coherence, between whom and their darkness, namely, those that forsook Him, a separation was made as we said at first by God, now will we, by His grace, proceed in our discourse already begun.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of the angels' knowledge of the Trinity in the Deity, and consequently of the causes of things in the Archetype, ere they come to be effected in works.

THESE holy angels learn not of God by sounds, but by being present with that unchangeable truth, His only begotten Word, Himself, and His Holy Spirit, that undivided Trinity, of substantial persons : yet hold they

not three Gods, but one, and this they know plainer than we know ourselves. The creatures also do they know better in the wisdom of God, the workman's draught, than in the things produced, and consequently themselves in that, better than in themselves, though having their knowledge in both : for they were made, and are not of His substance that made them. Therefore in Him their knowledge is day, in themselves, as we said, twilight. But the knowledge of a thing by the means it is made, and the thing itself made, are far different. The understanding of a line or a figure does produce a more perfect knowledge of it than the draught of it in dust : and justice is one in the changeless truth, and another in the just man's soul. And so of the rest, as the firmament between the waters above and below, called heaven, the gathering of the waters, the appearance of land, growth of plants, creation of souls and fishes, of the water, and four-footed beasts of the earth, and last, of man, the most excelling creature of all. All these the angels discerned in the word of God, where they had their causes of their production immovable and fixed, otherwise than in themselves : clearer in Him, but cloudier in themselves : yet referring all those works to the Creator's praise, it shines like morning in the minds of these contemplators.

CHAPTER XXX.

The perfection of the number six, the first is complete in all the parts.

AND these were performed in six days because of the perfection of the number of six, one being six times repeated : not that God was tied unto time, and could not have created all at once, and afterwards have bound the motions to time's congruence, but because that number signified the perfection of the work : for six is the first number that is filled by conjunction of the parts, the sixth the third and the half : which is one, two, and three ; all which conjoined are six. Parts in numbers are those that may be described of how many they are, as a half, a third, a fourth, and so forth. But four being in nine, yet is no just part of it : one is the ninth part, and three the third part. But these two parts, one and three, are far from making nine the whole. So four is a part of ten, but no just part : one is the tenth part, two the fifth, and five the second : yet these three parts one, two, and five, make not up full ten, but eight only. As for the number of twelve, the parts exceed it. For there is one the twelfth part, six the second, four the third, three the fourth, and two the sixth. But one, two, three, four and six, make above twelve, namely sixteen. This by the way now to prove the perfection of the number of six, the first (as I said), that is made of the conjunction of the parts : and in this did God make

perfect all His works. Wherefore this number is not to be despised, but has the esteem apparently confirmed by many places of Scripture. Nor was it said in vain of God's works, "Thou madest all things in number, weight and measure."¹

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of the seventh day, the day of rest and complete perfection.

BUT in the seventh day, that is, the seventh repetition of the first day (which number has perfection also in another kind), God rested, and gave the first rule of sanctification therein. The day that had no even, God would not sanctify in His works but in rest. For there is none of His works, but being considered first in God, and then in itself, will produce a day knowledge, and an even's. Of the perfection of seven, I could say much, but this volume grows big, and I fear I shall be held rather to take occasion to show my small skill, than to respect others' edification. Therefore we must have a care of gravity and moderation, lest running all upon number, we be thought neglecters of weight and measure. Let this be a sufficient admonition, that three is the first number, wholly odd, and four wholly even, and these two make seven, which is therefore oftentimes put for all: as here, "The just shall fall seven times a day, and arise again," that is, "How oftsoever he fall, he shall rise again."² (This is not meant of iniquity, but of tribulation, drawing him to humility.) Again, "Seven times a day will I praise thee:" the same he had said before: "His praise shall be always in my mouth." Many such places as these the Scripture has, to prove the number of seven to be often used for all, universally. Therefore is the Holy Spirit called oftentimes by this number, of whom Christ said, "He shall teach us all truth." There is God's rest, wherein we rest in God: in this whole, in this perfection is rest, in the part of it was labour: therefore we labour, because we know as yet but in part, but when perfection is come, that which is in part shall be abolished. This makes us search the Scriptures so laboriously. But the holy angels (unto whose glorious congregation our toilsome pilgrimage casts a long look), as they have eternal permanence, so have they easy knowledge, and happy rest in God, helping us without trouble, because their spiritual, pure, and free motions are without labour.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of their opinion that held angels to be created before the world.

BUT if some oppose, and say that that place, "Let there be light and there was light," was not meant of the angels' creation, but of some other

Wisd. xi.

² Pro. xxiv. 16.

corporal light, and teach that the angels were made not only before the firmament dividing the waters, and called heaven, but even before these words were spoken: "In the beginning God made heaven and earth:" taking not this place as if nothing had been made before, but because God made all by His wisdom and word, whom the Scripture also calls a beginning, as answered also to the Jews when they inquired Who He was: I will not contend, because I delight so in the intimation of the Trinity in the first chapter of Genesis. For having said: "In the beginning God made heaven and earth:" that is, the Father created it in the Son, as the psalm says: "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In Thy wisdom madest Thou them all:"¹ presently after, he mentions the Holy Spirit. For having showed the fashion of earth, and what a huge mass of the future creation God called heaven and earth: "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the deep:" to perfect his mention of the Trinity he added, "and the Spirit of the Lord moved upon the waters." Let each one take it as he likes: it is so profound that learning may produce divers opinions herein, all faithful and true ones: so that none doubt that the angels are placed in the high heavens, not as co-eternals with God, but as sure of eternal felicity: to whose society Christ did not only teach that His little ones belonged, saying, "They shall be equal with the angels of God:"² but he shows further, the very contemplation of the angels, saying: "See that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven, their angels always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of the two different societies of angels, not unfitly termed light and darkness.

THAT some angels offended, and therefore were thrust into prisons in the world's lowest parts; until the day of their last judicial damnation, St Peter testifies plainly, saying, "That God spared not the angels that had sinned, but cast them down into hell and delivered them into chains of darkness to be kept unto damnation." Now whether God's prescience separated these from the other, who doubts? That He called the other light, worthily, who denies? Are not we here on earth, by faith, and hope of equality with them, already ere we have it, called light by the apostles? "Ye were once darkness," says he, "but are now light in the Lord."³ And well do these perceive the other apostolical powers are called darkness, who consider them rightly, or believe them to be worse than the worst unbeliever. Wherefore though that light, which God said should be, and it was, be one thing and the darkness from which God separated the light, be another: yet the obscurity of

¹ Ps. civ.² Matt. xviii. 10.³ Eph. v. 8.

this opinion of these two societies, the one enjoying God, the other swelling in pride: the one to whom it said: "Praise God all ye His angels," the other whose prince said: "All these will I give Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me:" the one inflamed with God's love, the other, blown big with self-love (whereas it is said), "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the lowly:"¹) the one in the highest heavens, the other in the obscurest air: the one, piously quiet, the other madly turbulent: the one punishing or relieving according to God's justice and mercy: the other raging with the over unreasonable desire to hurt and subdue: the one allowed God's minister to all good, the other restrained by God from doing the desired hurt: the one scorning the other for doing good against their wills by temptations: the other envying this, the recollection of the faithful pilgrims: the obscurity (I say) of the opinion of these two so contrary societies (the one good in nature and will, the other good in nature also, but bad by will), since it is not explained by other places of Scripture, that this place in Genesis, of the light and darkness, may be applied as denominative unto them both (though the author had no such intent), yet has not been unprofitably handled: because though we could not know the author's will, yet we kept the rule of faith, which many other places make manifest. For though God's corporal works be here recited, yet have some similitude with the spiritual, as the apostle says: "You are all the children of the light, and the children of the day: we are no sons of the night nor darkness." But if this were the author's mind, the other disputation also attained perfection: that "so wise a man of God, nay the spirit in him," in reciting the works of God, all perfected in six days, might by no means be held to leave out the angels, either in the beginning, that is, because He had made them first, or (as we may better understand, "In the beginning") because He made them in His only begotten Word, in which beginning God made heaven and earth: which two names either include all the creation, spiritual and temporal, which is more credible: or the two great parts only as continents of the lesser, being first proposed in the whole, and then the parts performed orderly according to the mystery of the six days.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of the opinion that some held, that the angels were meant by the several waters, and of others that held the waters uncreated.

YET some there were that thought that the company of angels were meant by the waters: and that these words, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the

¹ James iv.

waters,"¹ meant by the upper waters the angels, and by the lower, either the nations, or the devils. But if this be so, there is no mention of the angels' creation, but only of their separation. Though some most vainly and impiously deny, that God made the waters, because He never said, "Let there be waters." So they may say of earth: for He never said, "Let there be earth." Aye, but say they: it is written God "created both heaven and earth." Did He so? Then is water included therein also, for one name serves both: for the psalm says, "The sea is His, and He made it, and His hands prepared the dry land:"² but the elementary weights do move these men not to take the waters above for the angels, because so an element cannot remain above the heavens. No more would these men, if they could make a man after their principles, put phlegm, being instead of water in man's body, in the head: but there is the seat of phlegm, most fitly appointed by God: but so absurdly in these men's conceits, that if we know not (though this book told us plain) that God had placed this fluid, cold and consequently heavy humour, in the uppermost part of man's body, these world-weighers would never believe it. And if they were subject to the Scripture's authority, they would yet have some meaning to shift by. But seeing that the consideration of all things that the Book of God contains concerning the creation would draw us far from our resolved purpose, let us now (together with the conclusion of this book) give end to this disputation of the two contrary societies of angels, wherein are also some grounds of the two societies of mankind, unto whom we intend now to proceed, in a fitting discourse.

¹ Gen. i.² Ps. xcv.



THE TWELFTH BOOK OF THE CITY OF GOD.

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CHAPTER I.

Of the nature of good and evil angels.

BEFORE I speak of the creation of man, wherein (in respect of mortal reasonable creatures) the two cities had their original, as we showed in the last book of the Angels : (to show as well as we can) the congruity and convenience of the society of men with angels : and that there are not four, but rather two societies of men and angels qualified alike, and combined in either, the one consisting both of good angels and men, and the other of evil : that the contrariety of desires between the angels, good and evil, arose from their diverse natures and beginnings, we may at no hand believe : God having been alike good in both their creations, and in all things beside them. But this diversity arises from their wills : some of them persisting in God, their common good, and in His truth, love, and eternity : and other some delighting more in their own power, as though it were from themselves, fell from that common all-blessing good to dote upon their own : and taking pride for eternity, vain deceit for firm truth, and factious envy for perfect love, became proud, deceitful, and envious. The cause of their beatitude was their adherence with God ; then must their misery's cause be the direct contrary, namely, their not adherence with God. Wherefore if when we are asked, "Why they are blessed?" and we answer well, "Because they stuck fast unto God," and being asked, "Why they are wretched?" we answer well, "Because they stuck not unto God : " then is there no beatitude for any reasonable or understanding creature to attain, but in God. So then though all creatures cannot be blessed, for beasts, trees, stones, &c., are incapable hereof ; yet those that are, are not so of themselves, being created of nothing, but they have it from the Creator. Attaining Him they are happy, losing Him, unhappy : but He Himself is good only of Himself, and therefore cannot lose His good, because He cannot lose Himself. Therefore the one, true blessed

God, we say is the only immutable good : and those things He made are good also, because they are from Him, but they are mutable because they were made of nothing. Wherefore though they be not the chief goods, God being above them, yet are they great, in being able to adhere unto the chief good, and so be happy, without which adherence they cannot but be wretched. Nor are other parcels of the creation better, in that they cannot be wretched : for we cannot say our other members are better than our eyes in that they cannot be blind : but even as sensitive nature in the worst plight is better than the insensible stone : so is the reasonable (albeit miserable) above the brutish, that cannot therefore be miserable. This being so, then this nature created in such excellence, that though it be mutable yet by inherence with God that unchangeable good, it may become blessed : nor satisfies the one need without blessedness, nor has any means to attain this blessedness but God, truly commits a great error and enormity in not adhering unto Him. And all sin is against nature and hurtful thereunto. Wherefore that nature differs not in Nature, from that which adheres unto God, but in vice : and yet in that vice is the nature itself laudable still. For the vice being justly discommended, commends the nature : the true dispraise of vice being, “that it disgraceth an honest nature :” so therefore even as when we call blindness a fault of the eyes, we show that sight belongs to the eye : and in calling the fault of the ears deafness, that hearing belongs to the ear : so likewise when we say it was the angels’ fault not to adhere unto God, we show that that adherence belonged to their natures. And how great a praise it is to continue in this adherence ; fruition and living in so great a good without death, error, or trouble, who can sufficiently declare or imagine ? Wherefore since it was the evil angels’ fault not to adhere unto God (all vice being against nature) : it is manifest that God created their nature good : since it is hurt only by their departure from Him.

CHAPTER II.

That no essence is contrary to God, though all the world’s frailty seem to be opposite to His immutable eternity.

THIS I have said lest some should think that the apostolical powers whereof we speak had a different nature from the rest, as having another beginning ; and not God to their author. Which one shall the sooner avoid by considering what God said unto Moses by His angels, when He sent him to the children of Israel : “I am that I am.”¹ For God being the highest essence, that is, eternal and unchangeable, gave essence to His creatures, but not such as His own : to some more, and to some less :

¹ Exod. iii.

ordering nature's existence by degrees ; for as wisdom is derived from being wise, so is essence *ab ipso esse*, of having being : the word is now not used of the old Latinists, but taken of late into the tongue, to serve for to explain the Greek *οὐσία*, which it expresses word for word. Wherefore unto that especial, high essence, that created all the rest, there is no nature contrary, but that which has no essence : for that which has being is not contrary unto that which has also being. Therefore no essence at all is contrary to God the chief essence, and cause of essence in all.

CHAPTER. III.

Of God's enemies not by nature, but will, which hurting them, hurts their good nature : because there is no vice but hurts nature.

THE Scripture calls them God's enemies, because they oppose His sovereignty not by nature but will, having no power to hurt Him, but themselves. Their will to resist, not their power to hurt, makes them His foes, for He is unchangeable and wholly incorruptible : wherefore the vice that makes them oppose God, is their own hurt, and no way God's : only, because it corrupts their good nature. Their nature it is not, but their vice that contraries God : evil only being contrary to good. And who denies that God is the best good ; so then vice is contrary unto God, as evil is unto good. The nature also which it corrupts is good, and therefore opposed by it : but it stands against God as evil only against good ; but against this nature as evil and hurt also, for evil cannot hurt God, but incorruptible natures only, which are good by the testimony of the hurt that evil does them, for if they were not good, vice could not hurt them, for what does it in hurting them but abolish their integrity, lustre, virtue, safety, and whatever vice can diminish or root out of a good nature ; which if it be not therein, vice takes it not away, and therefore hurts not : for it cannot be both a vice, and hurtless, whence we gather that though vice cannot hurt that unchangeable good, yet it can hurt nothing but good : because it is not but where it hurts. And so we may say that vice cannot be in the highest good, nor cannot be but in some good. Good therefore may be alone, but so cannot evil : because the natures that an evil will has corrupted, though as they be polluted they are evil, yet as they are natures, they are good. And when this vicious nature is punished, there is this good besides the nature, that it is not unpunished, for this is just, and what is just is questionless good, and no man is punished for the faults of his nature, but of his will, for that vice that has gotten from a custom into a habit and seems natural, had the original from corruption of will : for now we speak of the vices of that nature wherein is a soul capable of the intellectual light, whereby we discern between just and unjust.

CHAPTER IV.

Of lifeless and reasonless natures, whose order differs not from the decorum held in the whole universe.

BUT it were a sottishness to think that the faults of beasts, trees, and other unreasonable, senseless, or lifeless creatures, whereby their corruptible nature is damnified, are damnable : for the Creator's will has disposed of those, thus, to perfect the inferior beauty of this universe by this successive alteration of them. For earthly things are not comparable to heavenly : yet might not the world want those, because the other are more glorious. Wherefore in the succession of those things one to another in their due places, and in the change of the meaner into qualities of the better, the order of things transitory consists. Which order's glory we delight not in, because we are annexed to it, as parts of mortality ; we cannot discern the whole universe, though we observe how conveniently those parcels we see, are combined : whereupon in things out of our contemplation's reach, we must believe the providence of the Creator, rather than be so rash as to condemn any part of the world's fabric, of any imperfection. Though if we mark well, by the same reason, those involuntary, and unpunishable faults to those creatures, commend their natures unto us : none of whom has any other maker but God : because we ourselves dislike that that nature of theirs which we like should be defaced by that fault : unless men will dislike the natures of things that hurt them, not consider their natures, but their own profit, as of those creatures that plagued the pride of Egypt.¹ But so they might dispraise the sun, for some offenders, or unjust detainers of others' right, are by the judges condemned to be set in the hot sun. Wherefore it is not the consideration of nature in respect of our profit, but in itself that glorifies the Creator. The nature of the eternal fire is assuredly audible, though the wicked shall be therein everlastingly tormented. For what is more fair than the bright, pure, and flaming fire ? What more useful to heat, cure, or boil withal, though not so hurtful in burning ? Thus that being penally applied, is pernicious, which being orderly used, is convenient : for who can explain the thousand uses of it in the world ? Hear them not that praise the fire's light and dispraise the heat : respecting not the nature of it but their own profit and disprofit : they would see, but they would not burn. But they consider not that this light they like so, being immoderately used, hurts a tender eye : and that in this heat which they dislike so many creatures do very conveniently keep, and live.

¹ Exod. viii.

CHAPTER V.

That the Creator has deserved praise in every form and kind of nature.

WHEREFORE all natures are good, because they have their form, kind, and a certain rest withal in themselves. And when they are in their true posture of nature, they preserve the essence in the full manner as they received it: and that, whose essence is not eternal, follows the laws of the Creator that sways it, and changes into better, or worse, tending (by God's disposition) still to that end which the order of the universe requires, so that that corruption which brings all natures mortal into dissolution cannot so dissolve that which was, but it may become that afterwards which it was before, or that which it should be: which being so, then God, the highest being, who made all things that are not Himself (no creature being fit for that equality, being made of nothing, and consequently being not able to have been, but by Him), is not to be discommended through the taking offence at some faults, but to be honoured upon the due consideration of the perfection of all natures.

CHAPTER VI.

The cause of the good angels' bliss, and the evils' misery.

THE true cause, therefore, of the good angels' bliss is their adherence to that most high essence, and the just cause of the bad angels' misery is their departure from that high essence, to reside upon themselves, that were not such: which vice, what is it else but pride? "For pride is the root of all sin." These would not therefore stick unto Him, their strength, and having power to be more perfect by adherence to this highest good, they preferred themselves that were His inferiors before Him. This was the first fall, misery, and vice of this nature, which were it not created to have the highest being, yet might it have beatitude by fruition of the highest being: but falling from Him, not be made nothing, but yet less than it was, and consequently miserable. Seek the cause of this evil will, and you shall find just none. For what can cause the will's evil, the will being sole cause of all evil? The evil will therefore causes evil works, but nothing causes the evil will. If there be, then either it has a will or none. If it have, it is either a good one or a bad; if good, what fool will say, a good will is cause of an evil will? It should if it caused sin: but this were extreme absurdity to affirm. But if that it have an evil will, then I ask what caused this evil will in it? and to limit my questions, I ask the cause of the first evil will. For not that which another evil will has caused is the first evil will, but that which

none has caused : for still that which causes is before the other caused. If I be answered, that nothing caused it, but it was from the beginning, I ask then whether it were in any nature. If it were in none, it had no being ; if it were in any, it corrupted it, hurt it, and deprived it of all good ; and therefore this vice could not be in an evil nature, but in a good, where it might do hurt : for if it could not hurt, it was no vice, and therefore no bad will ; and if it did hurt, it was by privation of good, or diminishing of it. Therefore a bad will could be from eternity in that wherein a good nature had been before, which the evil will destroyed by hurt. Well, if it were not eternal, who made it ? It must be answered, something that had no evil will : what, was this inferior, superior, or equal unto it ? If it were the superior, it was better, and why then had it not a will, nay, a better will ?

This may also be said of the equal : for two good wills never make the one the other bad. It remains, then, that some inferior thing that had no will was cause of that vicious will in the angels. Aye, but all things below them, even to the lowest earth, being natural, is also good, and has the goodness of form and kind in all order. How then can a good thing produce an evil will ? how can good be cause of evil ? for the will turning from the superior to the inferior, becomes bad, not because the thing whereunto it turns is bad, but because the division is bad and perverse. No inferior thing then depraves the will, but the will depraves itself by following inferior things inordinately. For if two of like effect in body and mind should behold one beauteous personage, and the one of them be stirred with a lustful desire towards it, and the other's thoughts stand chaste, what shall we think was cause of the evil will in the one and not in the other ? Not the seen beauty, for it transformed not the will in both, and yet both saw it alike : not the flesh of the beholder's face, why not both ? nor the mind we presupposed them both alike before, in body and mind. Shall we say the devil secretly suggested it unto one of them, as though he consented not to it in his own proper will ?

This consent, therefore, the cause of this assent of the will to vicious desire, is that we seek. For, to take away one, lets more in the question, if both were tempted, and the one yielded, and the other did not, why was this, but because the one would continue chaste, and the other would not ? whence, then, was this secret fall but from the proper will, where there was such parity in body and mind, a like sight, and a like temptation ? So then he that desires to know the cause of the vicious will in the one of them, if he mark it well shall find nothing. For if we say that he caused it, what was he ere his vicious will, but a creature of a good nature, the work of God, that unchangeable good ? Wherefore he that says that he that consented to this lustful desire which the other withstood (both being before alike affected, and beholding the beautiful

object alike) was cause of his own evil will, whereas he was good before this vice of will ; let him ask why he caused this ? whether from his nature, or for that he was made of nothing ; and he shall find that his evil will arose not from his nature, but from his nothing : for if we shall make his nature the effecter of his vicious will, what shall we do but affirm that good is the efficient cause of evil ? But how can it be that nature (though it be mutable), before it have a vicious will, should do viciously, namely, in making the will vicious ?

CHAPTER VII.

That we ought not to seek out the cause of the vicious will.

LET none therefore seek the efficient cause of an evil will : for it is not efficient but deficient, nor is there effect but defect : namely falling from that highest essence, unto a lower, this is to have an evil will. The causes whereof (being not efficient but deficient) if one endeavour to seek, it is as if he should seek to see the darkness, or to hear silence : we know them both, this by the ear, and that by the eye : but not by any forms of theirs, but privation of forms. Let none then seek to know that of me which I know not myself : unless he will learn not to know what he must know, that he cannot know : for the things that we know by privation and not by form, are rather (if you can conceit me) known by not knowing : and in knowing them, are still unknown. For the body's eye coursing over bodily objects, sees no darkness, but when it ceases to see. And so it belongs to the ear, and to no other sense to know silence, which notwithstanding is not known but by not hearing. So our intellect speculates the intelligible forms, but where they fail it learns by not learning : for who can understand his faults ? This I know, that God's nature can never fail in time, nor in part : but all things that are made of nothing may decay : which do notwithstanding more good, as they are more essential : for then do they something when they have efficient causes : but in that they fail, and fall off, and do evil, they have deficient causes : and what do they then but vanity ?

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the perverse love, whereby the soul goes from the unchangeable to the changeable good.

I KNOW besides that wherein the vicious will is resident, therein is that done, which if the will would not, should not be done : and therefore the punishment falls justly upon those acts which are wills and not neces-

sities. It is not the thing to which we fall, but our fall that is evil : that is, we fall to no evil natures, but against nature's order, from the highest to the lower : and therefore evil. Covetousness is no vice in the gold, but in him that perversely leaves justice to love gold, whereas justice ought always to be preferred before riches. Nor is lust the fault of sweet beauteous bodies, but the soul's that runs perversely to bodily delights, neglecting temperance, which scorns all company with those, and prepares us unto far more excellent and spiritual pleasures. Vainglory is not a vice proper to human praise, but the soul's that perversely affects praise of men, not respecting the conscience's testimony. Nor is pride his vice that gives the power, but the soul's, perversely loving that power, contemning the justice of the Most Mighty. By this then, he that perversely affected a good of nature, though he attain it, is evil himself in this good, and wretched, being deprived of a better.

CHAPTER IX.

Whether He that made the angels' nature, made their wills good also, by the infusion of His love into them through His Holy Spirit.

SEEING therefore there is no natural nor essential cause, effecting the evil of will, but that evil of mutability of spirit, which depraves the good of nature, arises from itself : being effected no way but by falling from God, which falling also has no cause : if we say also that good wills have no efficient cause, we must beware lest they be not held uncreated and co-eternal with God. But seeing that the angels themselves were created, how can their wills but be so also ? Besides being created, whether were they created with them, or without them first ? if with them, then doubtless He that made one, made both : and as soon as they were created, they were joined to Him in that love wherein they were created. And therein were they severed from the other, because they kept their good wills still, and the other were changed by falling in their evil will, from that which was good, whence they need not have fallen unless they had listed. But if the good angels were at first without good wills, and made those wills in themselves without God's working, were they therefore made better of themselves than by His creation ? God forbid. For what were they without good wills, but evil. Or, if they were not evil because they had no evil wills neither, nor fell from that which they had not, howsoever they were not as yet so good, as when they had gotten good wills. But now if they could not make themselves better than God (the best workman of the world) had made them : then verily could they never have had good wills but by the operation of the Creator in them. And these good wills, affecting their conversion (not to themselves who were inferiors, but) to the supreme

God, to adhere unto Him, and be blessed by fruition of Him, what do they else but show, that the best will should have remained poor, in desire only, but that He who made a good nature of nothing capable of Himself, made it better by perfecting it of Himself, first having made it more desirous of perfection? for this must be examined: whether the good angels created good will in themselves, by a good will or a bad, or none: if by none, then none they created. If by a bad, how can a bad will produce a good? if by a good, then had they good wills already.

And who gave them those, but He that created them by a good will, that is, in that chaste love of their adherence to Him, both forming them nature, and giving them grace? Believe it therefore the angels were never without good will, that is, God's love: but those that were created good, and yet became evil by their proper will (which no good nature can do but in a voluntary defect from good, that, and not the good being the cause of evil), either received less grace from the divine love, than they that persisted therein, or if they had equal good at their creation, the one fell by the evil wills, and the other having further help attained that bliss, from which they were sure never to fall, as we showed in our last book. Therefore, to God's due praise we must confess that the diffusion of God's love is bestowed as well upon the angels, as the saints, by His Holy Spirit bestowed upon them: and that that Scripture, "It is good for me to adhere unto God,"¹ was peculiar at first to the holy angels, before man was made. This good they all participate with Him to whom they adhere, and are a holy city, a living sacrifice, and a living temple unto that God. Part whereof, namely that which the angels shall gather and take up from this earthly pilgrimage unto that society, being now in the flesh, upon earth, or dead, and resting in the secret receptacle of souls, how it had first original must I now explain, as I did before of the angels. For of God's work, the first man, came all mankind, as the Scripture says, whose authority is justly admired throughout the earth, and those natures, whom (amongst other things) it prophesied should believe it.

CHAPTER X.

Of the falseness of that history that says the world has continued many thousand years.

LET the conjectures therefore of those men that fable of man's and the world's original they know not what, pass for us: for some think that men have been always, as of the world; as Apuleius writes of men: "Severally mortal, but generally eternal," and when we say to them: why, if the world has always been, how can your histories speak true

¹ Ps. lxxiii.

in relation of who invented this or that, who brought up arts and learning, and who first inhabited this or that region? they answered us: "The world has at certain times been so wasted by fires and deluges, that the men were brought to a very few: whose progeny multiplied again: and so seemed this as man's first original, whereas indeed it was but a reparation of those whom the fires and floods had destroyed: but that man cannot have production, but from man." They speak now what they think, but not what they know: being deceived by a sort of most false writings, that say, "The world has continued a many thousand years," whereas the Holy Scripture gives us not account full six thousand years since man was made. To show the falseness of these writings briefly, and that their authority is not worth a rush herein, that epistle of Great Alexander to his mother, containing a narration of things by an Egyptian priest unto him, made out of their religious mysteries: contains also the monarchies, that the Greek histories record also: in this epistle the Assyrian monarchy lasts five thousand years and above. But in the Greek history, from Belus, the first king, it continues but one thousand three hundred years. And with Belus does the Egyptian story begin also. The Persian monarchy (says that epistle) until Alexander's conquest (to whom this priest spake thus), lasted above eight thousand years: whereas the Macedonians until Alexander's death lasted but four hundred four score and five years, and the Persians until his victory, two hundred thirty and three years, by the Greek story. So far are these computations short of the Egyptians', being not equal with them though they were trebled. For the Egyptians are said once to have had their years but four months long: so that one full year of the Greeks or ours, is just three of their old ones. But all this will not make the Greek and Egyptian computations meet: and therefore we must rather trust the Greek, as not exceeding our Holy Scriptures' account. But if this epistle of Alexander being so famous, differ so far from the most probable account, how much less faith then ought we to give to those their fabulous antiquities, fraught with leasings, against our divine books, that foretold that the whole world should believe them, and the whole world has done so: and which prove that they wrote truth in things past, by the true occurrences of things to come, by them presaged.

CHAPTER XI.

Of those that hold not the eternity of the world, but either a dissolution and generation of innumerable worlds, or of this one at the expiration of certain years.

BUT others there are, that do not think the world eternal, and yet either imagine it, not to be one world but many: or one only, dissolved and

regenerate at the date of certain years. Now these must needs confess, that there were first men of themselves, ere any men were begotten. For they cannot think that the whole world perishing, any man could remain, as they may do in those burnings and inundations which left still some men to repair mankind : but as they hold the world to be re-edified out of its own ruins, so must they believe that mankind first was produced out of the elements, and from these first, as man's following propagation, as other creatures, by generation of their like.

CHAPTER XII.

Of such as held man's creation too lately effected.

WHEREFORE our answer to those that held the world to have been *ab externo*, against Plato's express confession, though some say he spake not as he thought, the same shall be our answer still to those that think man's creation too lately effected, having let those innumerable spaces of time pass, and by the Scripture's authority been made but so late, as within this six thousand years. If the brevity of time be offensive, and that the years since man was made seem so few, let them consider that nothing that has an extreme, is continual : and that all the definite spaces of the world being compared to the interminate Trinity, are as (a very little, nay as) just nothing. And therefore though we should reckon five or six, or sixty, or six hundred thousand years, and multiply them so often till the number wanted a name, and say then God made man, yet may we ask why He made him no sooner ? For God's pause before man's creation being from all eternity was so great, that compare a definite number with it, of never so unspeakable a quantity, and it is not so much, as one half drop of water being counterpoised with the whole ocean ; for in these, though the one be so exceeding small, and the other so incomparably great, yet both are definite. But that time which has any original, run it on to never so huge a quantity, being compared unto that which has no beginning, I know not whether to call it small, or nothing. For, withdraw but moments from the end of the first, and be the number never so great, it will (as if one should diminish the number of a man's days from the time he lives in to his birth day) decrease, until we come to the very beginning. But from the latter abstract, not moments, nor days, nor months, nor years, but as much time as the other whole number contained (lay it out of the compass of all computation) and that as often as you please, prevail you when you can never attain the beginning, it having none at all ? Wherefore that which we ask now after five thousand years and the overplus, our posterity may as well ask after five hundred thousand years, if our mortality should succeed, and our infirmity endure so long. And our

forefathers, presently upon the first man's time might have called this in question. Nay, the first man himself, that very day that he was made, or the next, might have asked why he was made no sooner? But whensoever he had been made, this controversy of his original and the world's, should have no better foundation than it has now.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the revolution of times at whose expiration some philosophers held that the universe should return to the state it was in at first.

Now these philosophers believed that this world had no other dissolution, but a renewing of it continually at certain revolutions of time, wherein the nature of things was repaired : and so passed on a continual rotation of ages past and coming : whether this fell out in the continuance of one world, or the world arising and falling gave this succession, and date of things by its own renovation, from which ridiculous mocking they cannot free the immortal nor the wisest soul, but it must still be tossed unto false bliss, and beaten back into true misery. For how is that bliss true, whose eternity is ever uncertain, the soul either being ignorant of the return unto misery, or fearing it in the midst of felicity? But if it go from misery to happiness never to return, then is something begun in time which time shall never give end unto, and why not then the world? and why not man made therein? (to avoid all the false tracts that deceived wits have devised to distract men from the truth) : for some will have that place of Ecclesiastes : "What is it that hath been? that which shall be: what is it that hath been made? that which shall be made. And there is no new thing under the sun : nor any thing whereof one may say, behold this is new : it hath been already in the time that was before us,"¹ to be understood of these reciprocal revolutions, whereas he meant either of the things he spoke of before, viz., the successive generations ; the sun's motions ; the torrent's falls ; or else generally of all transitory creatures ; for there were men before us, there are with us, and there shall be after us ; so it is of trees, and beasts. Nay, even monsters, though they be unusual, and diverse, and some have fallen out but once, yet as they are generally wonders, and miracles, they are both past and to come : nor is it news to see a monster under the sun. Though some will have the wise man to speak of God's predestination that fore-framed all, and therefore that now there is nothing new under the sun. But far be our faith from believing that these words of Solomon should mean those revolutions that they do dispose the world's course and renovation by : as Plato the Athenian philosopher taught in the academy that in a certain unbounded space,

¹ Eccl. i. 9, 10.

yet definite, Plato himself, his scholars, the city and school, should after infinite ages meet all in that place again and be as they were when he taught this. God forbid I say that we should believe this. "For Christ once died for our sins, and rising again, dies no more, nor hath death any future dominion over Him, and we, after our resurrection shall be always with the Lord,"¹ to whom now we say with the psalm, "Thou wilt keep us, O Lord, and preserve us from this generation for ever."² The following place I think fits them best: the wicked walk in a circuit: not because their life (as they think) is to run circularly, but because their false doctrine runs round in a circular maze.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of man's temporal estate, made by God, out of no newness or change of will.

BUT what wonder if these men run in their circular error, and find no way forth, seeing they neither know mankind's original nor his end? being not able to pierce into God's depths: who being eternal, and without beginning, yet gave time a beginning, and made man in time whom He had not made before, yet not now makes He him by any sudden motion, but as He had eternally decreed. Who can penetrate this inscrutable depth, wherein God gave man a temporal beginning and had none before: and this out of His eternal, unchangeable will; multiplying all mankind from one? for when the psalmist had said, "Thou shalt keep us, O Lord, and preserve us from this generation for ever,"³ then he reprehends those whose fond and false doctrine reserve no eternity for the soul's blessed freedom, in adjoining, "The wicked walk in a circuit," as who should say, "What dost thou think or believe?" Should we say that God suddenly determined to make man, whom He had not made in all eternity before, and yet that God is ever immutable, and cannot change His will, lest this should draw us into doubt, he answers God presently, saying, "In thy deep wisdom didst Thou multiply the sons of men." Let men think, talk, or dispute as they will (says he) and argue as they think, "In thy deep wisdom," which none can discover, "didst thou multiply mankind." For it is most deep, that God should be from eternity, and yet decree that man should be made at this time, and not before, without alteration of will.

¹ Rom. vi. ; 1 Thess. 4.

² Ps. xii. 7.

³ Ps. xi.

CHAPTER XV.

Whether (to preserve God's eternal domination) we must suppose that He has always had creatures to rule over, and how that may be held always created, which is not co-eternal with God.

BUT I, as I dare not deny God's domination eternal from ever, so may I not doubt but that man had a temporal beginning before which he was not. But when I think, what God should be Lord over from eternity,¹ here do I fear to affirm anything, because I look into myself, and know that it is said, "Who can know the Lord's counsels, or who can think what God intendeth?"² Our cogitations are fearful, and our forecasts are uncertain. The corruptible body suppresses the soul, and the earthly mansion keeps down the mind that is much occupied. Therefore of these which I revolve in this earthly mansion, they are many, because out of them all I cannot find that one of them or besides them which perhaps I think not upon, and yet is true. If I say there have been creatures ever for God to be Lord of, who has been ever, and ever Lord : but that they were now those, and then others by success of time (lest we should make some of them co-eternal with the Creator, which faith and reason reprove) then must we look that it be not absurd for a mortal creature to have been successively from the beginning, and the immortal creature to have had a temporal original in this our time, and not before, wherein the angels were created (whether they be meant by the name of light, or, heaven, of whom it is said, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth"), and that they were not from the beginning, until the time that they were created : for otherwise they should be co-eternal with God. If I say they were not created in time, but before it, that God might be their Lord, who has been a Lord for ever ; then am I demanded, whether they were before all time, or how could they that were created be from eternity? And here I might perhaps answer how that which has been for the space of all time, may not be unfitly said to have been always, and they have been so far in all time, that they were before all time, if time began with heaven's motion, and they were before heaven. But if time began not so, but were before heaven, not in hours, days, months or years (for sure it is that these dimensions, properly called times, began from the stars' courses, as God said when He made them : "Let them be for signs, and seasons and days, and years"), but in some other wondrous motion, whose former part did pass by, and whose latter, succeeded, it being impossible for them to go both together : if there were such a heaven in the angels' motions, and that as soon as they were made, they began to move thus, even in this respect have they been from the begin-

¹ Rom. xi. 14.

² Wisd. iii.

ning of all time: time, and they, having original both at once. And who will not say that what has been for all time, has been always? But if I answer thus; some will say to me, why are they not then co-eternal with the Creator if both He and they have been always? What shall I say to this? That they have been always, seeing that time and they had original both together, and yet they were created? for we deny not that time was created, though it has been for all time's continuance; otherwise, there should have been a time that had been no time; but what fool will say so? we may say, there was a time when Rome was not: when Jerusalem was not: Abraham, or man himself, or so, when they all were not. Nay, the world itself being not made at times: beginning but afterwards, we may say, "there was a time when the world was not." But to say, there was a time when time was not, is as improper, as to say there was a man when there was no man, or a world, when the world was not. If we mean of divers particulars, we may say, this man was when that was not: and so this time was when that was not; true. But to say time was, when no time was, who is so sottish? So then as we say time was created, and yet has been always, because it has been whilst time has been, so is it no consequent then that the angels that have been always, should yet be uncreated, seeing they have been always, only in that they have been since time has been: and that because time could not have been without them. For where no creature is whose motion may proportion time forth, there can be no time: and therefore though they have been always they are created, and not co-eternal with the Creator: for He has been unchangeable from all eternity, but they were created, and yet are said to have been always, because they have been all time, that could not be without them. But time, being transitory, and mutable, cannot be co-eternal with unchanging eternity? And therefore though angels have no bodily transmutation, nor is this part past in them and the other to come, yet their motion, measuring time, admits the differences of past and to come: and therefore they can never be co-eternal with their Creator, whose motion admits neither past, present, nor future. Wherefore God having been always a Lord, has always had a creature to be Lord over, not begotten by Him, but created out of nothing by Him, and not co-eternal with Him, for He was before it, though in no time before it: nor foregoing it in any space, but in perpetuity. But if I answer this to those that ask me, how the Creator should be always Lord, and yet have no creature to be Lord over: or how has He a creature that is not co-eternal with Him, if it has been always: I fear to be thought rather to affirm what I know not, than teach what I know? So that I return to the Creator's revealed will; what He allows to wiser knowledges, in this life, or reserves for all unto the next, I profess myself unable to attain to. But this I thought to handle without affirming,

that my readers, may see what questions to forbear as dangerous : and not to hold them fit for farther inquiry : rather following the apostle's wholesome counsel, saying : "I say through the grace that is given me, unto every one amongst you, presume not to understand more than is meet to understand, but understand according to sobriety, as God hath dealt unto every man the measure of faith,"¹ for if an infant be nourished according to his strength, he will grow up, but if he be strained above his nature, he will rather fade than increase in growth and strength.

CHAPTER XVI.

How we must understand that God promised man life eternal before all eternity.

WHAT revolution passed ere man's creation, I confess I know not : but sure I am, no creature is co-eternal with the Creator. The apostle speaks of eternal times, not to come, but (which is more wondrous) past. For thus he says, "under the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, hath promised before all eternity of time : but His word He hath manifested in time."² Behold he talks of time's eternity past, yet makes it not co-eternal with God. For He was not only Himself before all eternity, but promised eternal life before it, which He manifested in His due time : that was, "His word :" for that is "eternal life." But how did He promise it unto men that were not before eternity, but that in His eternity and co-eternal world, He had predestinated what was in time to be manifested.

CHAPTER XVII.

The defence of God's unchanging will against those that fetch God's works about from eternity, in circles, from state to state.

NOR do I doubt that there was no man before the first man's creation: but deny the (I cannot tell what) revolution of the same man I know not how often, or of others like him in nature, nor can the philosophers drive me from this, by objecting (acutely they think) that *nullum infinitum est scibile*, infinite things are beyond reach of knowledge. And therefore God, say they, has definite forms in Himself of all the definite creatures that He made : nor must His goodness be ever held idle, nor His works temporal, as if He had had such an eternity of leisure before, and then repented Him of it, and so fell to work : therefore, say they, is this revolution necessary : the world either remaining in change (which, though it has been always, yet was created) or else being dissolved, and re-edified in this circular course : otherwise giving

¹ Rom. xii.

² Tit. i. 2.

God's works a temporal beginning, we seem to make Him disallow and condemn that leisure that He rested in from all eternity before as slothful and useless. But if He did create from eternity, now this and then that, and came to make man in time, that was not made before, then shall He seem not to have made him by knowledge (which they say contains nothing infinite) but at the present time, by chance as it came into His mind. But admit those revolutions, say they, either with the world's continuance in change, or circular revolution, and then we acquit God both of this (so long and idle seeming) cessation, and from all operation in rashness and chance. For if the same things be not renewed, the variation of things infinite is too incomprehensible for His knowledge or prescience.

These batteries the ungodly do plant against our faith, to win us into their circle: but if reason will not refute them, faith must deride them. But by God's grace, reason will lay those circularities flat enough. For here is these men's error: running rather in a maze than stepping into the right way, that they proportionate the divine, unchangeable power, unto their human, frail and weak spirit, in mutability and apprehension. But as the Apostle says: "Comparing themselves to themselves, they know not themselves."¹ For because their actions that are suddenly done proceed all from new intents, their minds being mutable, they do imagine (not God, for Him they cannot comprehend) but themselves for God, and compare not Him to Himself, but themselves (in His stead) unto themselves. But we may not think that God's rest affects Him one way, and His work another, He is never affected, nor does His nature admit anything that has not been ever in Him. That which is affected, suffers, and that which suffers is mutable. For His vacation is not idle, slothful, nor sluggish, nor is His work painful, busy, or industrious. He can rest working, and work resting. He can apply an eternal will to a new work, and begins not to work now because He repents that He wrought not before. But if He rested first and wrought after (which I see not how man can conceive), this first and after were in things that first had no being, and afterwards had. But there was neither precedence nor subsequence in Him to alter or abolish His will, but all that ever He created was in His unchanged fixed will eternally one and the same: first willing that they should not be, and afterwards willing that they should be, and so they were not, during His pleasure, and began to be, at His pleasure. Wondrously showing to such as can conceive it, that He needed none of these creatures, but created them of His pure goodness, having continued no less blessed without them, from all unbegun eternity.

¹ 2 Cor. x. 12.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Against such as say that things infinite are above God's knowledge.

BUT such as say that things infinite are past God's knowledge, may even as well leap headlong into this pit of impiety, and say that God knows not all numbers. That numbers are infinite, it is true, for take what number you can, and think to end with it, let it be never so great and immense, I will add unto it, not one, nor two, but by the law of number, multiply it unto ten times the sum it was. And so is every number composed, that one cannot be equal to another, but all are different, every particular being different, and all in general, infinite. Does not God then know these numbers because they are infinite, and can His knowledge attain one sum of numbers, and not the rest? what madman would say so? nay, they dare not exclude numbers from God's knowledge, Plato having so commended God for using them in the world's creation: and our Scripture says of God, "Thou hast ordered all things in measure, number, and weight;"¹ and the Prophet says: "He numbereth the world;" and the Gospel says: "All the hairs of your heads are numbered."²

God forbid then that we should think that He knows not number: whose wisdom and understanding is innumerably infinite, as David says: for the infiniteness of number, though it be beyond number, is not unknown to Him whose knowledge is infinite. Therefore if whatsoever be known, be comprehended in the bound of that knowledge, then is all infiniteness bounded in the knowledge of God, because His knowledge is infinite, and because it is not incomprehensible unto His knowledge. Wherefore if number's infiniteness be not infinite unto God's knowledge, nor cannot be, what are we mean wretches that dare presume to limit His knowledge, or say that if this revolution be not admitted in the world's renewing, God cannot either foreknow all things ere He made them, or know them when He made them? whereas His wisdom being simply and uniformly manifold, can comprehend all incomprehensibility by His incomprehensible comprehension, so that whatsoever thing that is new and unlike to all other He should please to make, it could not be new, nor strange unto Him, nor should He foresee it a little before, but contain it in His eternal prescience.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the worlds without end, or ages of ages.

THAT He does so, and that there is a continual connection of those times which are called *secula seculorum*, ages of ages, or worlds

¹ Wisdom xi. 17.

² Mat. x. 30.

without end : running on in a predestinate difference : only the souls that are freed from misery, remaining eternally blessed, or that these words, *secula seculorum*, do import the world's idea remaining firm in God's wisdom and being the efficient cause of this transitory world, I dare not affirm. The singular may be an explication of the plural, as if we should say, heaven of heaven, for the heavens of heavens. For God calls the firmament above which the waters are, heaven,¹ in the singular number, and yet the psalm says, "And you waters that be above the heavens, praise the name of the Lord."² Which of those two it be, or whether *secula seculorum* have another meaning, is a deep question. We may let it pass, it belongs not to our proposed theme : but whether we could define, or but observe more by the discourse, let us not adventure to affirm aught rashly in so obscure a controversy. Now are we in hand with the circulary persons that turn all things round about till they become repaired. But which of these opinions soever be true concerning these *secula seculorum*, it is nothing to these revolutions, because whether the worlds of worlds be not the same revolved, but others successively depending on the former (the freed souls remaining still in their endless bliss), or whether the worlds of worlds be the forms of these transitory ages, and ruling them as their subjects : yet the circularities have no place here howsoever : the saints' eternal life overthrows them utterly.

CHAPTER XX.

Of that impious assertion that souls truly blessed, shall have divers revolutions into misery again.

FOR what godly ears can endure to hear, that after the passage of this life in such misery (if I may call it a life, being rather so offensive a death, and yet we love it rather than that death that frees us from it), after so many intolerable mischiefs, ended all at length by true zeal and piety, we should be admitted to the sight of God, and be placed in the fruition and participation of that incorporeal light and unchangeable immortal essence with love of which we burn, all upon this condition, to leave it again at length, and be re-inked in mortal misery amongst the hellish immortals, where God is lost, where truth is sought by hate, where blessedness is sought by uncleanness, and be cast from all enjoying of eternity, truth, or felicity : and this not once but often, being eternally revolved by the course of the times from the first to the latter : and all this, because by means of these circularities, transforming us and our false beatitudes in true miseries (successively, but yet eternally), God might come to know His own works. Whereas otherwise He should neither be able to rest from working, nor know aught that is in-

¹ Genesis xii.

² Ps. cxlviii.

finite? Who can hear or endure this? Which were it true, there were not only more wit in concealing it, but also (to speak my mind as I can) more learning in not knowing it: for if we shall be blessed in not remembering them there, why do we aggravate our misery in knowing them here? But if we must needs know them there, yet let us keep ourselves ignorant of them here, to have the happier expectation, than the good is that we shall attain: here expecting blessed eternity, and there attaining only bliss, but with assurance that it is but transitory. But if they say that no man can attain this bliss unless he know the transitory revolutions thereof, ere he leave this life, how then do they confess that the more one loves God, the easier shall he attain bliss, and yet teach the way how to dull this loving affect. For who will not but love him lightly whom he knows he must leave, and hold against his truth and wisdom, and that, when by the perfection of his bliss, he comes to the full knowledge of him? one can never love his friend faithfully, if he know that he shall become his enemy. But God forbid that this threatening of theirs that our misery should never be ended, but only interrupted now and then by false happiness, should be true. For what is falser than that bliss, wherein we shall be either wholly ignorant in such light or otherwise continually afraid of the loss of it, being on the top of felicity? If we know not that we shall become wretched, our misery here is wiser than happiness there. But if we shall know it, then, the wretched soul had better live in miserable state and go from thence to eternity, than in a blessed state to fall from thence to misery. And so our hope of happiness is unhappy, and of misery, happy: and consequently, we suffering miseries here, and expecting them there, are rather wretched than blessed in truth. But piety cries out, and truth convinces this to be false. The felicity promised us is true, eternal, and wholly uninterrupted by any revolution to worse.

Let us follow Christ, our right way, and leave this circular maze of the impious. For if Porphyry the Platonist refused his master's opinion in this circumrotation of souls, being moved hereto either by the vanity of the thing, or by fear of the Christians' arguments; and had rather affirm (as I said in the tenth book) that the soul was sent into the world to know evil, that being purged from it, it might return to the Father, and never more suffer any such pollution: how much more then ought we to detest this impiety, this enemy of true faith and Christianity? These circles now being broken, there is nothing urges us to think that man had no beginning, because (I know not what) revolutions have kept all things in such a continual course of up and down, that nothing can be new in the world. For if the soul be freed, and shall no more return to misery, it being never freed before, there is an act, and that a great one, new begun, namely, the soul's possession of eternal bliss.

And if this fall out in an immortal nature without any circumvolution,

why is it not as possible in mortal things? If they say that bliss is no new thing to the soul, because it returns but unto that which it enjoyed always before: yet is the freedom new then, for it was never freed before, being never miserable, and the misery is new unto it, that was never miserable before. Now if this newness happen, not in the order that God's providence allotted, but by chance, where are our revolutions that admit nothing new, but keep all in one course? But if this novelty be within the compass of God's providence, be the soul given from heaven, or fallen from thence, there may be new accidents that were not before, and yet in the order of nature. And if the soul by folly procure itself new misery (which the divine providence foresaw and included in the order of things, freeing it from thence also by this provident power), how dare flesh and blood then be so rash as to deny that the divinity may produce things new unto the world (though not to Himself) which though He foresaw, yet were never made before? If they say it is no news that the freed souls return no more to misery, because there are some daily and daily freed from thence, why then they confess that there are still new souls created, to be new freed from new miseries. For if they say they are not new souls, but have been from eternity, which are daily put into new bodies, and living wisely, are freed, never to return: then they make the souls of eternity, infinite: for imagine a number of souls never so large, they could not suffice for all the men of these infinite ages past, if each soul as soon as it was quit, flew up, and returned no more. Nor can they show how there may be an infinite sort of souls in the world, and yet debar God from knowing of things infinite. Wherefore seeing their revolutions of bliss and misery are cashiered, what remains but to aver that God can when His good pleasure is, create what new thing He will, and yet because of His eternal foreknowledge never change His will? And whether the number of those freed, and not returning souls may be increased, look they to that, who will keep infiniteness out of the world: we shut up our disputation on both sides. If it may be increased, why deny they that that may be made now, that had no being before, if that number of freed souls that was before, be not only increased now, but shall be for ever? But if there be but a certain number of souls to be freed, and never to return, and that number be not increased, howsoever it shall be, it is not the same yet that it must be, nor can it increase to the consummation but from a beginning, which being not before man, that man was made to begin, before whom was no other.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of the state of the first man, and mankind in him.

THIS hard question of God's power to create new things without change of will, because of His eternity, being (I hope) sufficiently handled, we may plainly see that He did far better in producing mankind from one man only, than if He had made many: for whereas He created some creatures that love to be alone, and in deserts, as eagles, kites, lions, wolves, and such like: and others, that had rather live in flocks and companies, as doves, stars, stags, hinds, and such like; yet neither of those sorts did He produce of one alone, but of many together. But man, whose nature He made as mean between angels and beasts, that if he obeyed the Lord his true Creator, and kept his behests, he might be transported to the angels' society: but if he became perverse in will, and offended his Lord God by pride of heart, then that he might be cast unto death like a beast, and living the slave of his lusts after death be destinate unto eternal pains, him did He create one alone, but meant not to leave him alone without another human fellow: thereby the more zealously commending true concord unto us, men being not only of one kind in nature, but also of one kindred in affect: creating not the woman He meant to join with man, as He did man, of earth, but of man, and man whom He joined with her, not of her, but of Himself, that all mankind might have their propagation from one.

CHAPTER XXII.

That God foreknew that the first man should sin, and how many people He was to translate, out of his kind into the angels' society.

GOD was not ignorant that man would sin, and so incur mortality both for himself and his progeny: nor that mortals should run on in that height of iniquity, that brute beasts should live at more atonement and peace between themselves, whose original was out of water and earth, than men whose kind came all out of one, in honour of concord: for lions never war among themselves, nor dragons, as men have done. But God foresaw withal, that His grace should adopt the godly, justify them by the Holy Spirit, pardon their sins, and rank them in eternal peace with the angels, the last and most dangerous death being destroyed: and those should make use of God's producing all mankind from one, in learning how well God respected unity in mankind.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the nature of man's soul, being created according to the image of God.

THEREFORE God made man according to His image and likeness,¹ giving him a soul whereby in reason and understanding he excelled all the other creatures, that had no such soul. And when He had made man thus of earth, and either breathed the soul which he had made, into him, or rather made that breath one which he breathed into him (for to breathe, is but to take a breath) then out of his side did He take a bone, whereof He made him a wife, and an help, as He was God, for we are not to conceive this carnally, as we see an artficer work up anything into the shape of a man, by art: God's hand is His power working visible things invisibly. Such as measure God's virtue and power that can make seeds of seeds by those daily and usual works, hold this rather for a fable than a truth: but they know not this creation, and therefore think unfaithfully thereof; as though the works of ordinary conception, and production, are not strange to those that know them not, though they assign them rather to natural causes than account them the Deity's works.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Whether the angels may be called creators, of any, the least creature.

BUT here we have nothing to do with them that hold the divine essence not to meddle with those things at all. But those that follow Plato in affirming that all mortal creatures, of which man is the chief, were made by the lesser created gods, through the permission or command of the Creator, and not by Himself that framed the world; let them but abjure the superstition wherein they seek to give those inferiors just honours, and sacrifices, and they shall quickly avoid the error of this opinion, for it is not lawful to hold any creature, be it never so small, to have any other Creator than God, even before it could be understood. But the angels (whom they had rather call gods) though at His command they work in things of the world, yet we no more call them creators of living things, than we call husbandmen the creators of fruits and trees.

CHAPTER XXV.

That no nature or form of anything living has any other Creator but God.

WHEREAS there is one form given externally to all corporal substances according to the which potters, carpenters, and others shape antiques, and figures of creatures: and another that contains the efficient causes hereof in the secret power of the uniting and understanding nature, which

¹ Gen. ii.

makes not only the natural forms, but even the living souls, when they are not extant. The first, each artificer has in his brain, but the latter belongs to none but God, who formed the world and the angels without either world or angels; for from that all-dividing, and all-effective divine power, which cannot be made, but makes, and which in the beginning gave rotundity both to the heavens and sun, from the same, had the eye the apple, and all other round figures that we see in nature their rotundity not from any external effective, but from the depth of that Creator's power that said, "I fill heaven and earth:" and whose wisdom reaches from end to end, ordering all in a delicate decorum: wherefore what use He made of the angels in the creation, making all Himself, I know not. I dare neither ascribe them more than their power, nor detract anything from that. But with their favours, I attribute the estate of all things as they are natures unto God, only of whom they thankfully acknowledge their being: we do not then call husbandmen the creators of trees or plants, or anything else: for we read, "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God, that giveth the increase."¹ No, nor the earth neither, though it seems the fruitful mother of all things that grow: for we read also: "God giveth bodies unto what He will, even to every seed his own body."² Nor call we a woman the creatrix of her child, but Him that said to a servant of His, "Before I formed thee in the womb I knew thee:"³ and although the woman's soul being thus or thus affected, may put some quality upon her burthen, as we read that Jacob coloured his sheep diversely by spotted sticks: yet she can no more make the nature that is produced, than she could make herself: what seminal causes then soever that angels or men do use in producing of things living or dead, or proceed from the copulation of male and female, or what affections soever of the mother dispose thus or thus of the colour or feature of her conception, the natures thus or thus affected in each of their kinds are the works of none but God: whose secret power passes through all, giving all being to all whatsoever, in that it has being: because without that He made it, it should not be thus, nor thus, but have no being at all: wherefore if in those forms external, imposed upon things corporal, we say that (not workmen) but kings, Romulus was the builder of Rome, and Alexander of Alexandria, because by their direction these cities were built: how much the rather ought we to call God the builder of nature, who neither makes anything of any substance but what He had made before, nor by any other ministers but those He had made before: and if He withdraw His efficient power from things, they shall have no more being than they had ere they were created: ere they were, I mean in eternity, not in time: for who created time, but He that made them creatures, whose motions time follows.

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 7.² 1 Cor. xv. 38.³ Hier. i.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Platonists' opinion that held the angels God's creatures, and man the angels'.

AND Plato would have the lesser gods (made by the highest) to create all other things, by taking their immortal part from him, and framing the mortal themselves: herein making them not the creators of ourselves, but our bodies only. And therefore Porphyry, in holding that the body must be avoided ere the soul be purged, and thinking with Plato, and his sect, that the souls of bad livers were for punishment thrust into bodies (into beast's also says Plato, but into man's only says Porphyry) affirms directly that these gods whom they will have us to worship as our parents and creators, are but the forgers of our prisons, and not our formers, but only our jailors, locking us in those dolorous grates, and wretched fetters: wherefore the Platonists must either give us no punishment in our bodies, or else make not those gods our creators, whose work they exhort us by all means to avoid and to escape: though both these positions be most false, for the souls are neither put into bodies to be thereby punished, nor has anything in heaven or earth any creator but the Maker of heaven and earth. For if there be no cause of our life, but our punishment, how is it that Plato says the world could never have been made most beautiful, but that it was filled with all kind of creatures? But if our creation (albeit mortal) be the work of God; how is it punishment then to enter into God's benefits, that is, our bodies? and if God (as Plato says often) had all the creatures of the world in His prescience, why then did not He make them all? would He not make some, and yet in His unbounded knowledge, knew how to make all? wherefore our true religion rightly affirms Him the Maker both of the world, and all creatures therein, bodies, and souls, of which, in earth man, the chief piece was made alone, after His image, for the reason showed before, if not for a greater: yet was he not left alone, for there is nothing in the world so sociable by nature, and so jarring by vice, as man is; nor can man's nature speak better either to the keeping of discord whilst it is out, or expelling it when it is entered; than in recording our first father, whom God created single, (from him to propagate all the rest) to give us a true admonition to preserve an union over greatest multitudes. And in that the woman was made of his rib, was a plain intimation of the concord that should be between man and wife. These were the strange works of God, for they were the first. He that believes them not, must utterly deny all wonders: for if they had followed the usual course of nature, they had been no wonders. But what is there in all this whole work of the divine

providence, that is not of use, though we know it not? The holy psalm says: "Come and behold the works of the Lord, what wonders He hath wrought upon the earth."¹ Wherefore, why the woman was made of man's rib, and what this first seeming wonder prefigured, if God vouchsafe, I will show in another place.

CHAPTER XXVII.

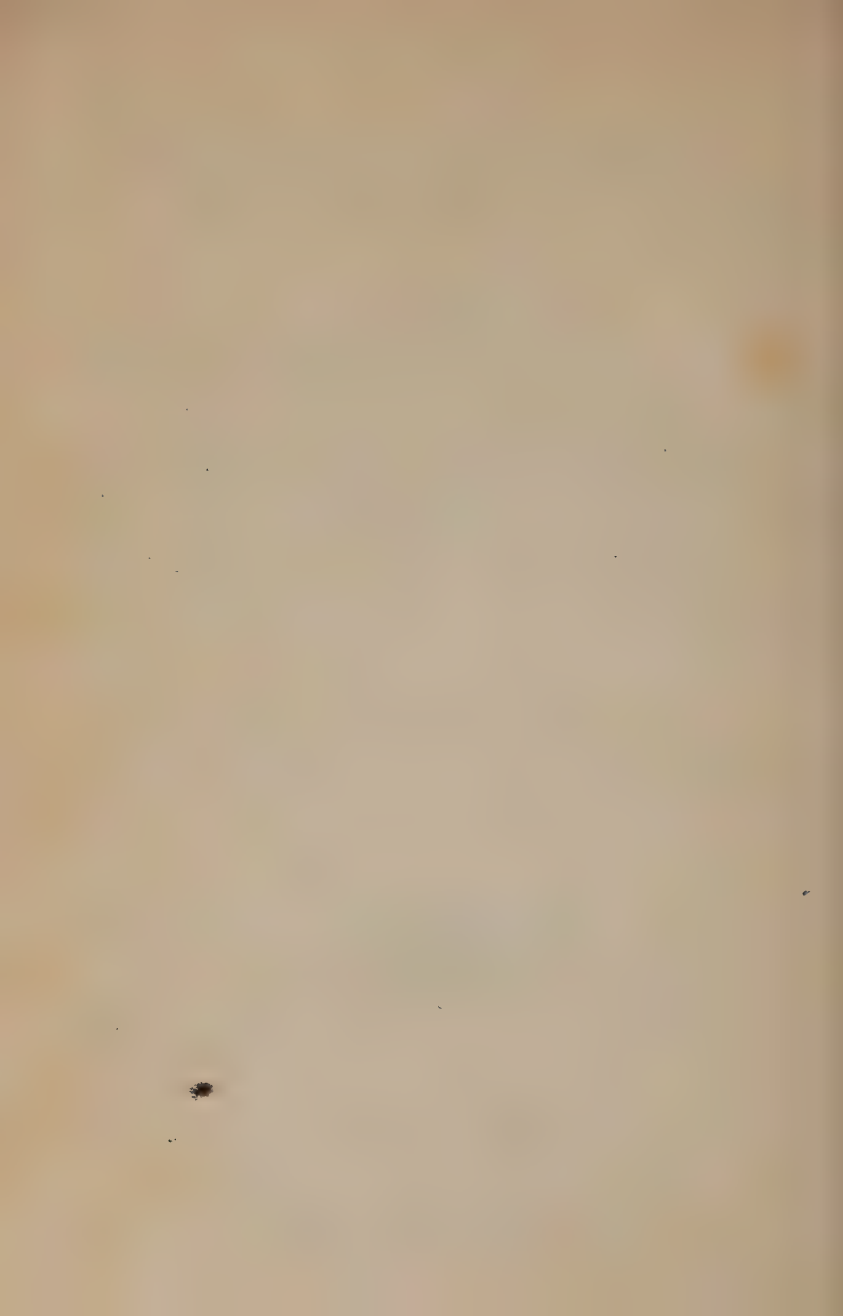
That the fulness of mankind was created in the first man, in whom God foresaw both who should be saved, and who should be damned.

BUT now because we must end this book; let this be our position: that in the first man, the foresaid two societies or cities, had original; yet not evidently, but unto God's prescience: for from him were the rest of men to come: some to be made fellow-citizens with the angels in joy: and some with the devils in torment, by the secret, but just judgment of God. For seeing that it is written: "All the ways of the Lord be mercy and truth,"² His grace can neither be unjust, nor His justice cruel.

¹ Ps. xli. 8.

² Ps. xxv. 10.





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